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# The

# BUCCANEERS

## A STORY OF THE BLACK FLAG IN BUSINESS

## HENRY M. HYDE

Form No. 1.

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**  
INCORPORATED  
23,000 OFFICES IN AMERICA. CABLE SERVICE TO ALL THE WORLD.  
ROBERT C. CLOWRY, President and General Manager.

Receiver's No. \_\_\_\_\_ Time Filed \_\_\_\_\_ Check \_\_\_\_\_

Metropolis, 9/13 1903

**SEND** the following message subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to.

To Edward Livingstone,  
Commercial House, Pierson City.

Pile	first	of	patent	suits
Follow	with	one	daily	for
month	Bring	damage	suit	for
two	hundred	thousand	against	International
Advertise	everywhere	Wireless	one	half
off	Gloom	Thomas	Tabb	

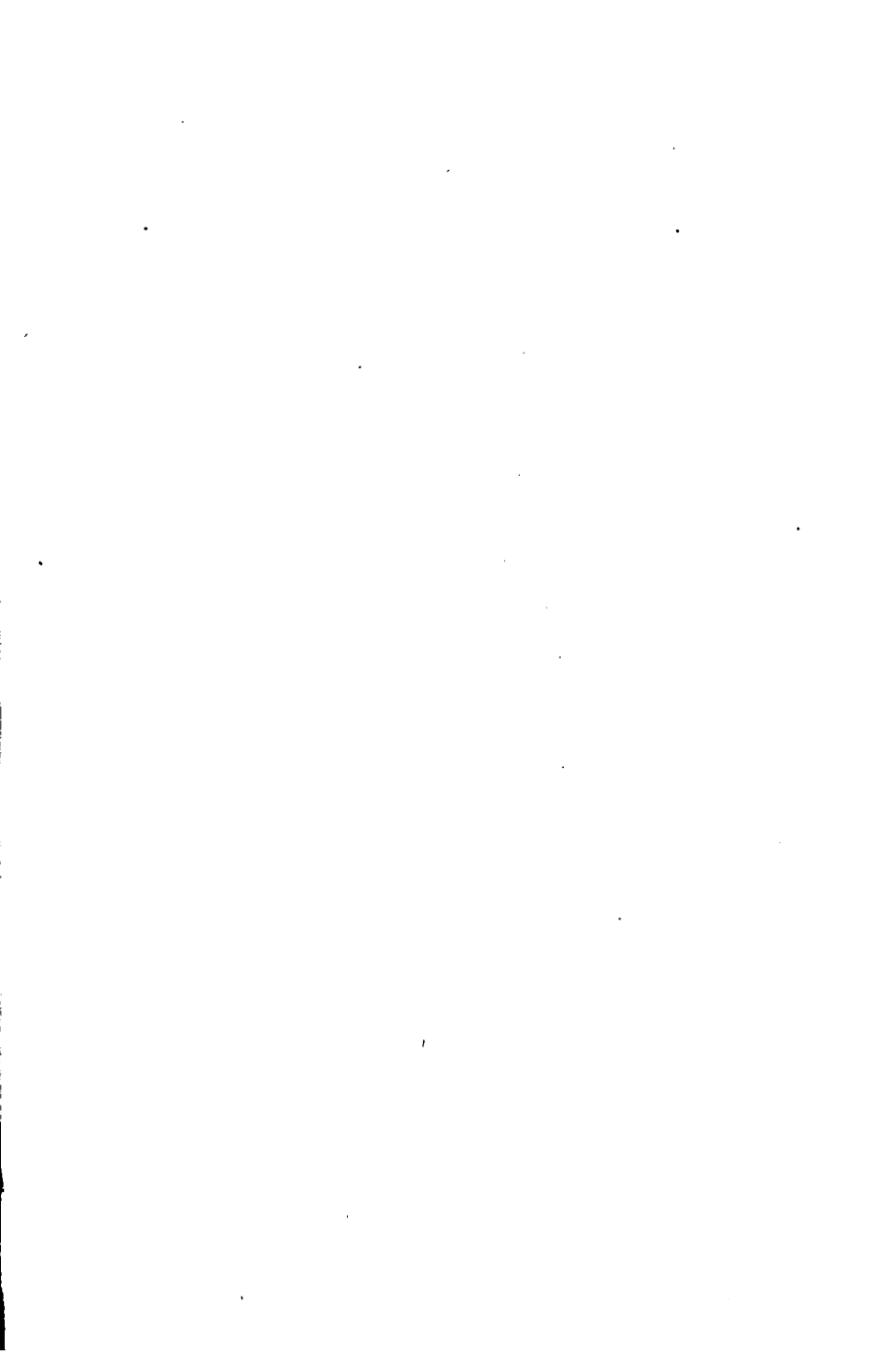
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and  
Alexander Reading Gulick  
Memorial Fund















LIVINGSTONE SWUNG THE AX UP OVER HIS  
SHOULDER,

[Page 9]



# T h e BUCCANEERS

*A Story of The*  
BLACK FLAG  
IN BUSINESS

*By*  
HENRY M. HYDE

*Frontispiece By*  
BERT KNIGHT

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY  
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1904

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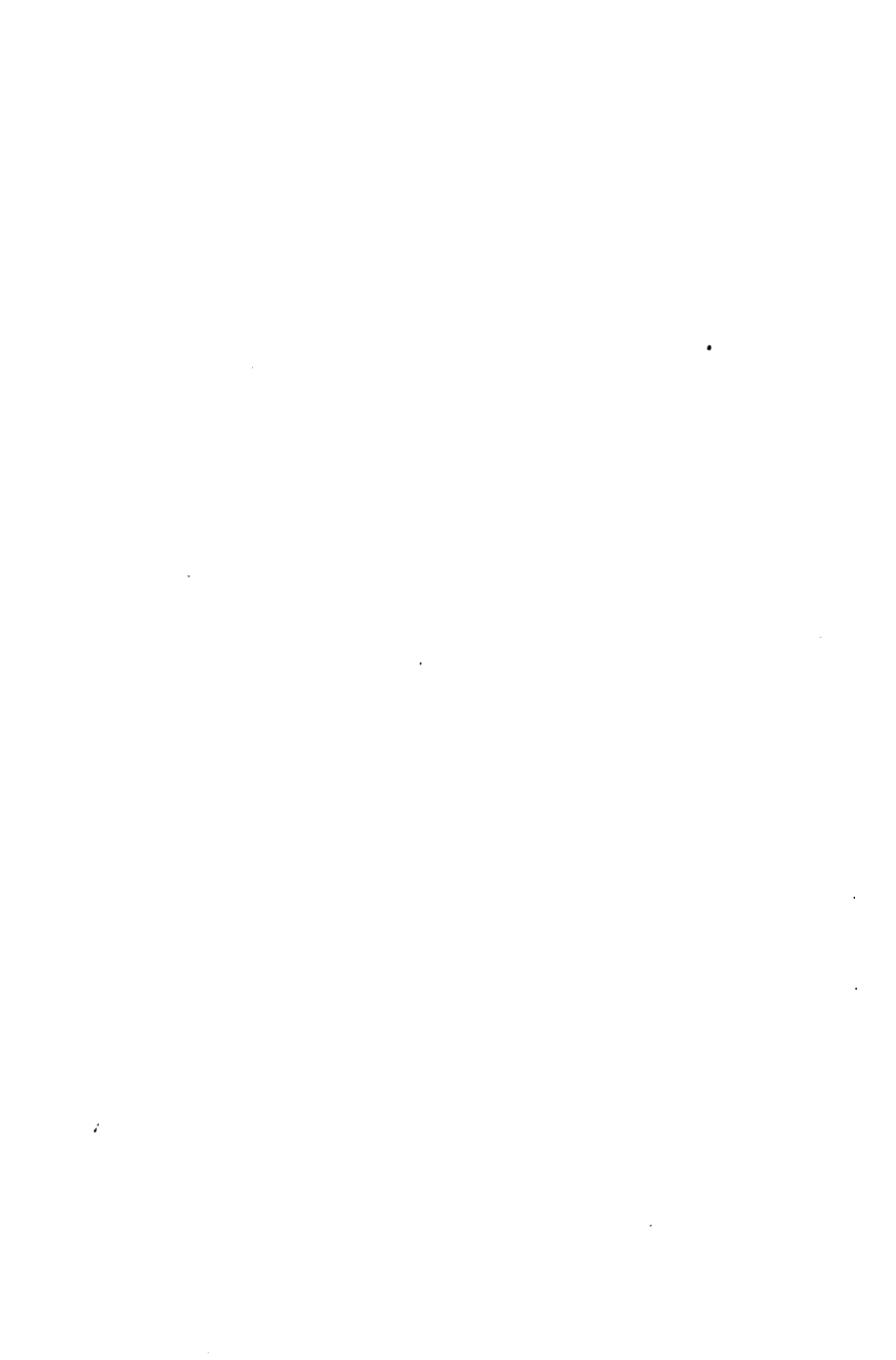
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# THE BUCCANEERS

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## CHAPTER ONE

### THE ROVER'S COMMISSION

**T**HOMAS TABB, president of the Wireless Motor Company, sat in his office at the factory looking over some reports from the treasurer. The reports were pleasing, for they showed a profit for the last six months of over twelve per cent. on the capital stock of one million dollars. It seemed certain that the annual dividend of twenty per cent. could be easily continued, perhaps increased.

That was as it should be. For when a man has started with six thousand dollars, a few brass cog-wheels, and a burning am-



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bition to get rich; when, fighting against the bitter prejudices of a stupid public, he has devoted the best twenty years of his life to the creation of a great business; when he has spared neither himself nor other men, working eighteen hours out of the twenty-four for months at a time; when he has strained his credit nearly to the breaking point a dozen times; when he has compromised with his conscience and done hard and cruel things, all to the one great end; then the accumulation of fat profits and the feeling of power that comes with them are the chief satisfactions which life has left.

It had taken Thomas Tabb nearly ten years to get his factory on a paying basis. Nobody but Tabb himself knew what those ten years had cost him. The minute he saw success ahead, a dozen piratical competitors had sprung up in different parts of the country and had attempted to steal

## THE ROVER'S COMMISSION

the prize from between his very jaws. But Thomas Tabb, in fighting the wolf so long, had acquired certain wolfish characteristics.

The business of making and selling wireless motors was his, absolutely his. He had created it. It was the child of his body, mind, and soul. Why should he spare thieves who were trying to steal his patents, his customers, his expert mechanics, personally trained by him?

A virgin defending her honor fights no more desperately than did Thomas Tabb in attacking every man who cast even the eye of envy on his beloved business and the field it occupied. East, west, north, and south, the world over, the searchlight of his suspicion swept the horizon, and at the first sign of a possible competitor all the trained forces of his great organization instantly took the field. If war is hell, Thomas Tabb was ready to make of business a duplication of the bottommost pit.

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In his masterful mind the question of right and wrong was a simple one. Whoever or whatever threatened his unquestioned position as the creator and lord of the wireless motor business was infernally wrong. Anything done in its defense or to overwhelm its enemies was eternally right. On this one issue a blood feud, sparing neither age nor sex, ran between him and the remainder of mankind. On indifferent matters—and everything else was relatively indifferent—he knew how to be kindly, even generous.

Such was his reputation as a determined and relentless fighter that for nearly three years now Thomas Tabb had had the wireless motor business in his own hands. He was willing that one or two little companies in the same line should drag out a miserable existence on their way to the courts of bankruptcy, so that cranks and fanatics should have no excuse for saying that he

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was running a monopoly. But he had made and sold ninety per cent. of all the wireless motors demanded by the trade of the world, and the other companies existed only on sufferance.

Thomas Tabb looked up from the reports of his treasurer and glanced out of the window. The expression of his face suddenly changed completely. The webs of little wrinkles about his eyes were smoothed away and into the cold, blue eyes themselves came a warmer look; a smile started at the corners of his mouth and then quickly lost itself in the hard lines which ran down on either side of his nose.

Half a block away he saw a tall young girl coming toward the factory. She had gathered her white skirts about her and was picking her way across the switch tracks and in and out between the freight-cars and trucks which dotted the view. It was Ellen, his daughter, his only child.

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Thomas Tabb had never quite forgiven her for being born a girl. He wanted a son, whom he could rear and train to become his successor in the business, and that his only child should have been a girl was a permanent disappointment. She was a continual reminder of the unwelcome fact that there were some things which were beyond his control.

But, being a girl, she was tall and fresh and comely—good to look upon. Thomas Tabb felt a thrill of pride and pleasure as he watched her graceful progress and caught the red glint of the sunshine reflected from her splendid hair. After all, since she had to be a girl, it was something to know that his daughter was of the finest type.

With her was a tall, broad-shouldered young man in a short clerical coat. It was when he recognized the Rev. William Baldwin that the sudden smile evoked by

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the sight of his daughter vanished even more suddenly than it had come. To be sure it was not easy to find any specific fault with the young preacher. He was a straight, manly figure, with a strong jaw, and a steady blue eye that faced every issue without flinching. His college reputation as a football player—his heroic nickname among the alumni was "Big Bill"—made him distinctly popular with the young people of Metropolis, and his fondness for a certain lean, clean-cut, white bull terrier had caused some of the older members of the church to question whether he could be quite orthodox. Thomas Tabb admitted to himself that a good man had been lost to business when Baldwin went into the ministry.

But Thomas Tabb did not at all fancy even the idea of having a preacher for a son-in-law, and his habitual suspicion made him uneasy. Since Ellen had been born a

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girl, the only remedy for that sad mistake of fate was to select a husband for her who would be fit to succeed him at the head of the Wireless Motor Company. A minister was out of the question. Of course he knew that sometimes girls took such matters into their hands, pleasing their own sweet wills and disobeying their parents. But not his daughter! He was Thomas Tabb, and his word was law in his family, with his four thousand employees, and among most of his associates. He had no idea of taking any violent action, thus arousing the opposition of his daughter. He knew how to handle such delicate matters tactfully, using indirect means and accomplishing his ends often without even the knowledge of his creatures. But now as he watched Will Baldwin and Ellen coming toward the factory his indefinite suspicions grew stronger. During the year since the girl had been home from Vassar

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she and the young minister had been together much of the time. Ellen had sung in the choir of St. Mark's Chapel, which Will Baldwin served as rector, and she had taken an active part in a good deal of the social work connected with the church. It was certainly time, thought Tabb, to take some action. He would find out how the ground lay, and would send Ellen away for a month or two, to try what a change of companions and surroundings would do. In the mean time——

The door of his office opened and Ellen and Will Baldwin came in. Thomas Tabb got up to receive them. He shook hands with the minister and asked them both to sit down. He was wondering what had brought them together to make this unusual call. Could it be possible that things had already come to a climax between them? Were his fears well founded, after all? Was this a crisis he was called on to



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face? Somehow he shrank from the responsibility.

"Surprised, aren't you, father?" said Ellen, whose presence seemed to bring life and color into the gray old office. "Well, Mr. Baldwin wants to talk to you about something very important, and I insisted on coming over with him. He didn't want me to come"—she smiled—"but I told him I was just as much interested as he was. Now that I've had my way, I'll leave you men alone."

She laughed gaily and got up as if to leave the office. Thomas Tabb felt a great reluctance to face what he now felt was to be a decidedly unpleasant and critical situation. He wanted time to gather his forces. This was taking an unfair advantage of him.

Just as Will Baldwin straightened himself to speak the office door opened, and John Sheldon, manager of the Wireless

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Motor Company, came hurrying in, an open letter in his hand. Thomas Tabb could have blessed him for the interruption. Sheldon was one of the men whom Thomas Tabb had casually considered in canvassing the field for a husband for Ellen. Nervous force was written all over him. He was tall and heavily built about the shoulders, with a drooping black mustache and a tremendous nose. He had fought his way up from the bottom, and now stood next to Tabb himself in the management of the business. He was a business man, and his presence in the office seemed, in some strange way, to renew the old man's courage.

Sheldon was plainly embarrassed when he saw that there were visitors in the office. He was in love with Ellen, and, when he turned to shake hands with her, he was so anxious to make a good impression that

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he overdid it. He was effusive, instead of courteous, and the cool dampness of his hand affected her like the sight of a snake. When Will Baldwin gripped him in *his* big paw, the glint in Sheldon's eyes was unpleasant. Then he turned to his chief.

"Pardon me," he said. "I didn't know I was intruding. I've got something important here, but it can wait. I'll come back later."

"No, I'll take it up now," answered Thomas Tabb, still fighting for time. "Sit down"—to his daughter and Mr. Baldwin—"I'll be with you in a minute."

Ellen and the minister walked over to a corner of the room and sat down. Thomas Tabb took the letter from Sheldon and swung around to his desk. But the matter that Sheldon had called to bring to his attention was more important than he had imagined. As he read the letter for the second time, all thought of his daughter

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and of her affairs vanished from his mind. Here was something which threatened the very existence of his beloved business. In an instant he was the cool, calculating captain of industry, marshaling his forces for the attack. The letter was from Jordan, agent of the Wireless Motor Company at Pierson City.

"I hear that the International Electric Appliance Corporation of this city is starting to build wireless motors," Jordan wrote. "They are keeping it pretty dark and I can't find out anything definite, but am told they will send out some machines for trial in a few weeks, and expect to have them regularly on the market next fall."

Almost before he had finished reading the letter Thomas Tabb had pressed a button for a clerk.

"Wire Dun and Bradstreet for complete reports on the International Electric Appliance Corporation of Pierson City," was

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his first order, "and hand the reports to me."

A good general must have, first of all, as complete an idea as possible of the resources of his enemy. In this case Thomas Tabb knew in advance that they were very large. The International Corporation had a capital of ten million dollars, a splendid organization covering the whole civilized world, and a reputation as a determined and relentless fighter equal to that of Thomas Tabb himself.

As the clerk went out with his order, and quicker than it can be told, he had rung the bell in what is called in the factory of the Wireless Motor Company the gloom department.

The head of the gloom department came into the office of the president. He did not see, or at least he did not notice, Ellen Tabb and her escort. In appearance he was the opposite of what might have been

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expected. He was tall, athletic in figure, smiling and well dressed, looking like what a "drummer" would call a "damned smooth party."

"Ed," said Thomas Tabb, "we've got to open up on the International people at Pierson City. Read this."

The head gloomer read the letter and looked up expectantly.

"I knew this would come sooner or later," went on the old man. "They've been skirmishing around the edges of our preserves for five years. Now the quicker the fight comes, the better for us. I want you to go to Pierson City and call on all the directors of the International. Give them the biggest dose of gloom you can, and bring some of them back for a trip through the graveyard."

A little flush came into the cheeks of Ellen Tabb. During most of her years of discretion, while her father was building

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up his great business, she had been away at school. She knew little of business or of business methods, but this talk she was forced to overhear of gloom and graveyards sounded inhuman and bloodthirsty. From where she sat the profile of her father's face was in sight. She looked over at him curiously. His bushy gray brows were pulled low over his eyes, his beak-like nose projected almost to his thin-lipped, straight mouth, on either side of which ran a deep line. He snapped out his orders through half-closed lips. It was an expression she had never seen before and it affected her unpleasantly. She was half afraid of him. Then she glanced at the Rev. Will Baldwin, but he was looking out of the window.

"I'll leave for Pierson City to-night, Mr. Tabb," said the smiling apostle of gloom.

"All right," said the old man. "Come in and see me again before you get away."

The head of the gloom department—his

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name was Edward Livingstone, and he drew a salary of fifteen thousand dollars a year—went out, and Thomas Tabb summoned Albert J. Rixton, the general attorney for the Wireless Motor Company.

"Where's Fritz Schmidt?" asked the old man, after the lawyer had read Jordan's letter.

"He's in town now."

"Send him to Pierson City on the first train. We want a report by telegraph of every wireless motor shipped out of their place. Who can you get to buy one of their first machines for us?"

"I'll leave that to Schmidt. He's got a firm up at South Harvey that may do."

"As soon as our experts get through examining their machine, I want you to start a series of patent suits, one every thirty days as long as you can keep it up. Advertise each of them as a news telegram all over the country. Right after you file the



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first patent suit begin a suit for two hundred thousand dollars damages against the International and its stockholders. Can you get a list of them?"

"I think I can," answered Rixton.

"Send each of them a marked copy of a newspaper containing a notice for the suit for damages and also of each patent suit. If there are any women among the stockholders, let me know and I'll put Livingstone after them."

This was war, and war on women at that! Ellen Tabb glanced at Will Baldwin again. His face was flushed and there was an embarrassed look in his eyes.

Rixton, the attorney, left the room and Thomas Tabb sat still at his desk for a moment, reviewing the campaign he had just outlined. Then, with an evident start, he recalled the presence of his visitors and swung about in his chair to face another difficult situation.

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"Well," he said, running one hand over his eyes, as if to drive away all thought of the news which had so conquered his attention. "I didn't expect to keep you waiting so long, Mr. Baldwin."

"I'll run along now, father," said Ellen, getting up, "and leave Mr. Baldwin with you. Good-by."

The old man fancied he saw an appealing look in her eyes. When she went out he turned grimly to give the young minister his quietus. His fighting blood had been stirred by his interviews with his lieutenants and he felt equal to anything.

"Well, Mr. Baldwin," he said, sharply, "what can I do for you?"

"I called to talk with you about the men in your iron foundry," began the young minister, plunging at once to the heart of his subject. "They have organized a union."

Thomas Tabb heaved a sigh of relief.

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His fears were groundless after all. It was not the question of his daughter's future which was at issue. But this was quite as bad, perhaps worse. This was a meddling attempt to interfere in the management of his business.

"I know it," he said shortly. "What of it?"

"I thought perhaps we could do something to prevent trouble, sir," Will Baldwin went on.

"There won't be any trouble, except for the people who are looking for it," declared Thomas Tabb.

"There have been a couple of agitators down here from New York for two months," said the minister. "They've got the boys all stirred up and I'm afraid there's great likelihood of serious trouble if something isn't done."

"I know all about those devils being here," answered Thomas Tabb. "I knew

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it twenty-four hours after they struck town. I've got a full report of every one of their meetings here in my desk."

He pulled out a drawer and held up a bundle of type-written sheets.

"They can't make a move without my knowing all about it. I'm sorry for some of our old men, but they've got to take their medicine now. The thing's got to go through to the end now it's been started. I'm bound to show them how foolish it is for outsiders to try to interfere in my business. That's all."

The implication was too pointed to be overlooked. Baldwin got up to go.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Tabb," he said. "A good many of the men have been practically forced into joining the union. I hoped——"

"Yes, I know, Mr. Baldwin, and I sha'n't be too hard on them," Thomas Tabb interrupted. "By the way, what's become of

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that plan of yours for starting a kindergarten for the children here in the factory district?"

"We're still working on it, Mr. Tabb."

"I've got a lot over on Clark Street you might as well be using for the kindergarten. Would a thousand dollars be enough to get the thing started?"

"Oh, plenty," began Will Baldwin, and, before he could say any more, Thomas Tabb had turned to his desk and was writing a check. Then he pressed the button which called his secretary and issued instructions to have the Clark Street lot turned over, rent free, to be used as a site for the new kindergarten.

"Here, Mr. Baldwin," said Tabb presently, handing him the check and speaking in a tone which carried with it a polite dismissal. "And when I can help you further, let me know."

Will Baldwin went out feeling chagrined and humiliated. He had wanted to help

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the men, with most of whom he was on friendly and even confidential terms. He felt that many of them had been misled by vicious counsel, while others had been forced into action they did not approve. He had been received as an impertinent meddler and dismissed as a beggar.

"Keep your nose out of my business! Here's a check for a thousand dollars. Run along now and play with it."

That fairly summed up his treatment by Thomas Tabb. And the talk he had heard of gloom and graveyards and "getting after" women. It was the talk of savages! And Ellen! What right had he even to think of falling in love with her? Yet who had a better? Because this duty, which had mastered him, seemed to force him to run counter to her father's dictatorial will, was he to fall back like a coward and leave this angel of all that was beautiful and pure and lovely to be contaminated?

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His fists were clenched and the big muscles in his shoulders tightened.

He would take her away from it all—to what? He thought of the endless days of work, of worry, of plain, poor living in some little country town, and his heart sank. It would be unfair to the girl; more cowardly than to leave her to live in the luxury to which she was accustomed. Already he felt himself at outs with what the world calls success. It cost too much to be successful—too much in unmanly fawning on the great and powerful; too much in sacrifice of sympathy and kindness and brotherly love.

His mind was made up. The demon of duty, which in a few men is stronger than anything else, gripped him hard.

That evening, when Thomas Tabb got home from the factory, his daughter met him at the door of the big hall.

“Well, Ellen,” he said, stealing the open-

## THE ROVER'S COMMISSION

ing. "I gave your preacher a thousand dollars for his kindergarten this afternoon."

"That's fine," the girl answered. "Father, what did all that talk mean about graveyards and things over at Pierson City?"

"There's a set of thieves over there trying to steal your father's business, and he don't calculate to let them do it. That's all. Just business, my dear. Don't bother your head about it."

"Well, I didn't know whether it would be safe for me to go over there or not," she went on, laughingly. "Anne Edmonds has asked me to come and visit her for a month. She was my room-mate last year, you know."

That fell in well with Thomas Tabb's plans.

"Why, of course you'll go," he answered. "A change'll do you good. I don't believe you'll get scalped."



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“Father,” said Ellen, fondly laying a hand on the old man’s shoulder, “don’t you think Will Baldwin’s a mighty fine, manly fellow?”

“Tut! Tut! Ellen,” answered Thomas Tabb. “I don’t think you can go over to Pierson City a bit too soon.”

## CHAPTER TWO

### SCOUTING

**F**RITZ SCHMIDT sat close to the open window on the second floor over the Mechanics' Rest Saloon in Pierson City. Directly across the street, which was half filled with switch tracks, lay the immense plant of the International Electric Appliance Corporation. The Mechanics' Rest was largely patronized by the men from the factory. It was also headquarters for unemployed workmen who were waiting for jobs. The half dozen rooms on the second floor of the little red frame building were rented to that class of people.

Fritz Schmidt had come into the saloon

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a week before, rented the front room facing the street, and paid for it a week in advance. Since that time he had spent most of his time sitting close to the open window, which happened to be exactly opposite to the shipping platform of the Electric Appliance Corporation. The platform was dotted with big shipping cases and crates of various sizes and shapes.

Schmidt was shabbily dressed. His face was heavy, stolid, and unshaven. You would go far to find a man who looked so completely stupid, so entirely unintelligent. That was half the reason why he was at the head of the Secret Service of the Wireless Motor Company. The other half reason lay hidden behind the fact that Schmidt's apparent stupidity concealed a cunning and unscrupulous mind.

Schmidt sat at one side of the window, so that he could glance diagonally across the street without giving any one a chance

## SCOUTING

to get a look at him. He was reading a volume of the philosophy of Karl Marx in the original German. At regular intervals he looked up from the book and cast his eyes across the street to the shipping platform.

"That looks like one," said Schmidt, half aloud, after one of his regular glances. He laid down the book and picked up a large pair of field glasses which lay on a little table at his elbow. For a moment he studied a tall, narrow packing-box of peculiar shape which a truckman had just wheeled out upon the shipping platform.

"That's one, all right," he said, his closely clipped mustache distorted in an unpleasant grin.

On the table lay a pile of telegraph blanks. Schmidt took a stubby lead pencil from his vest-pocket and started to write a message:

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"A. J. Rixton, 1777 Crusoe Building, Metropolis: First run out to-day. Riley & Co., Osterman, Wisconsin——"

He left the message unfinished and made a second searching examination with the field-glasses. Then he changed the last word of his message from "Wisconsin" to "Michigan."

"That shipping clerk makes a poor M," he said.

Another truckman came out upon the platform and dumped a second tall, narrow packing-case close to the first. Schmidt studied it through his field-glasses for a moment.

"The idiot has dumped it with the address on the other side," he said.

It was a warm August afternoon. Schmidt pulled out an old grip-sack from beneath the bed and swept the pile of telegraph blanks and the field-glass into it. Then he locked the sack, replaced it under

## SCOUTING

the bed, and went out of the room, locking the door behind him.

He wore an old cloth cap and carried a faded coat over his arm. As he walked over across the tracks to the shipping platform even a careful observer would have taken him for the most stupid of recent immigrants. Without paying any attention to the men at work on the platform he picked his way among the cases and crates until he got on the other side of the second packing-box which had excited his attention. He had barely time to glance at the address stenciled on the cover before the foreman of the shipping room grabbed him by the arm.

"Here! What are you doing around here?" demanded the foreman.

An expression of frightened stupidity came over Schmidt's face. "I look me for a job," he said.

"You want to go around and see the em-

## THE BUCCANEERS

ployment bureau," said the foreman with a patronizing smile.

"Alles recht," said Schmidt, submissively, touching his cap.

Just then a truckman came out with a third tall, narrow packing-box and dumped it close to the door and at the other side of the platform. But Schmidt saw it out of the tail of his eye and changed his direction accordingly.

He had worked around to a position from which he could read the address on the third box before the foreman noticed that he was still hanging around the platform.

"Look a here," said the foreman, running over to where Schmidt was standing in stupid confusion, "you want to get out a here and do it quick, too. I told you to go see the employment bureau."

"Yah! Yah!" stammered Schmidt, terror written on his face. "Excoose me. I

## SCOUTING

t'ought you says me to go in by dat door."

"Aw! Go chase yourself, you big Dutch dummy," said the foreman, a grin spreading over his face. "If you don't look out, you'll fall through a crack in the floor."

The truckmen were laughing at the discomfiture of the dolt. Schmidt shambled back across the street, the picture of stupid chagrin. He went in at the front door of the Mechanics' Rest, walked through the bar-room, and climbed the stairs at the rear.

"The fools," he said, as he sat down at the little table, the opened gripsack beside him. "I hate the bosses, but these cattle I despise."

Then he finished the telegram he had begun before going across the street.

"A. J. Rixton, 1777 Crusoe Building, Metropolis: First run out to-day. Riley



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& Co., Osterman, Michigan; Snooks & Davis, South Harvey, Illinois; R. T. Brooks, Sioux City, Iowa; all American. Second is ours."

As Schmidt finished his message and glanced out of the window again, he saw the red and green wagons of the express companies backing up to the shipping platform. The three packing-cases which interested him were loaded into the American Express wagon. Schmidt watched them through the field-glasses as they rattled by on their way to the railroad station. Then he walked over to the telegraph office and sent the message.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP

**A**NNE EDMONDS met Ellen Tabb at the station in Pierson City. As they drove through the streets on their way to the Edmonds' residence in the suburbs, Livingstone, the gloomer, who happened to be standing in front of the hotel, lifted his hat and bowed to Miss Tabb.

"Who is that?" asked Anne.

"One of the men from my father's factory," answered Ellen Tabb, carelessly.

"To-night," went on Anne, "we're going to have a little dance out at the house. I hope you're not too tired?"

"I'm never too tired to dance," laughed Ellen, as the girls got out at the house,

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which stood far back from the road in a grove of oak-trees.

Mrs. Edmonds received her daughter's friend warmly, and, after a cup of tea, the two girls went up to lie down and rest in preparation for the evening's pleasure. At six o'clock they dressed for the dance.

"We're having six young people in to dinner," said Anne. "John Clark will take you in. I hope you'll like him. He's the richest young man in Pierson City and awfully good looking."

"Dear me," Ellen said with a smile, "that sounds formidable."

John Clark proved to be a very tall, straight young man, with a closely clipped brown mustache and a self-contained manner. He impressed one at once as a man who was used to having his own way. There was an air of authority about him which was at once fascinating and irritating. When he was presented to Ellen, the

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fact that her home was in Metropolis was not mentioned. Later, in response to a casual inquiry, some one told him that Miss Tabb was from New York. Her presence as a guest in the home of Mrs. Edmonds made it impossible for him to connect her in any way with the president of the Wireless Motor Company.

At dinner Ellen found John Clark entertaining and interesting. And there could be no question that he was greatly taken with his pretty neighbor. After dinner came the music and the dancers, fifty young men and women coming in to fill the big ball-room on the top floor of the Edmonds' house. Ellen danced several times with John Clark and found him a good partner. Whatever he did he seemed to do well. She noticed that people spoke to him with a certain deference. He was plainly a strong man.

"To-morrow evening, Miss Tabb," he

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said, before the dance was over, "I am giving a little dinner out at the Polo and Hunt Club. Tom Edwards is taking Miss Anne and her mother. May I drive you out to the club-house?"

"I will ask Mrs. Edmonds," said Ellen. The elder lady cordially gave her consent, and the details were arranged.

At one o'clock in the morning the two girls sat down in Ellen's bedroom to talk it over.

"Ellen," said Anne, laughingly shaking a warning finger at her guest, "you certainly made a great impression on John Clark. And you'd better look out, for he's a dangerous man. He has a way of getting what he wants."

"Yes?" said Ellen, inquiringly.

"Why, only twenty years ago, when he was a boy of fifteen, he started to work in my father's factory, running errands or something of that kind. Father took a lik-

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ing to him from the start and kept promoting him and promoting him. I used to hear him say that John Clark was the smartest young man he had ever known. Then, before he was thirty, he was made vice-president of the company, and finally, when father died, he was elected president. Now he's a millionaire and all that sort of thing. Don't you think he's handsome?"

"I think he's very interesting," said Ellen Tabb, quite willing to change the subject of conversation. "Who was that young fellow you were dancing with most of the evening?"

In the laughter which followed, Mr. Clark and his career were lost sight of, though they did not vanish so quickly from the thoughts of Ellen Tabb.

Next afternoon John Clark called with his dog-cart. Anne and her mother were just starting in Tom Edwards' automobile,

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and presently Ellen found herself sitting beside John Clark on the high seat and being driven rapidly through the suburbs of the city on the way to the Hunt clubhouse, which stood on the hilltop, three miles to the south. Presently they approached a great row of tall brick buildings, evidently the plant of some huge factory.

"What's this, Mr. Clark?" Ellen asked, curiously.

"These are the buildings of our factory," he answered. "It's the biggest of its kind in the world, I believe. I'd be glad to take you through while you're here, if you'll go?"

"INTERNATIONAL ELECTRIC APPLIANCE CORPORATION" was the sign painted in big white letters on one end of the main building. As she read it Ellen caught her breath with a sudden start. She felt a hot flush come into her face. This was the

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corporation her father was fighting. And here she was riding with its president!

Just then Fritz Schmidt came shambling across the street from the Mechanics' Rest saloon. Ellen half recognized him as a man she had often seen around her father's factory, and the sight added greatly to her embarrassment.

"And you are the president of this great corporation?" she said, by way of making conversation. Never in her life had she felt herself in such a false position.

"Yes," he answered, easily. "I was elected at the death of Mr. Edmonds to succeed him."

That was the last complication necessary to complete her shame and chagrin. For the moment she had forgotten what Anne had told her the night before. But now she realized with its full force the fact that her hostess as well was interested in this corporation which her father had described



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as a "set of thieves," and which she had heard him sending out his lieutenants to attack. Livingstone, she remembered, was to "get after women." Perhaps he would call on Mrs. Edmonds while she was in her house! She felt an almost irresistible inclination to jump out of the dog-cart and run away from it all.

"You must like business immensely?" she heard herself saying, and she wondered at the same moment why she was making such an utterly inane remark.

"Well, Miss Tabb," Clark answered, with a smile, "there are some things about it I confess I don't like. It isn't pleasant, for instance, to have to fight a lot of unscrupulous competitors. Just now we're having a battle with a pack of wolves over at Metropolis. If we don't meet them on their own ground, they'll tear us to pieces. It's pretty hard on a man's conscience sometimes, I tell you."

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"But is it necessary?" Ellen asked, still wondering why, in spite of herself, she was pursuing the subject.

"I'm afraid it is," Clark answered. "The president of a corporation, you know, feels responsible not only for his own property but for the investments of a lot of innocent people. Take my case, for instance. Mrs. Edmonds has all her money invested in our plant. Would you expect me to let this Wireless Motor Company steal our business and ruin Mrs. Edmonds, without making a fight for it? And if I have to fight them with their own weapons, am I to be blamed?"

"And is it really so much worse than other companies?" Ellen persisted.

"What? The Wireless? It was built up by tactics which would disgrace a sneak-thief. It has hired spies, corrupted clerks and book-keepers, and ruined men and driven women to disgrace. It has——"

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Clark glanced suddenly at the girl beside him. Her face was white and drawn. He could feel her tremble.

"Why, what's the matter?" he asked, alarmed.

"Nothing," Ellen stammered.

The dog-cart stopped at the wide porch of the country club-house and a groom took the horse's head. Clark jumped down and helped Ellen to alight.

"Mr. Clark," she said, in a low voice, "my home is in Metropolis, and my father is president of the Wireless Motor Company."

Then, before he could do more than stammer the beginning of an apology, she had turned and hurried into the club-house, where Anne was standing at the door to receive her.

"I am ill, Anne," she said. "May I lie down?"

Anne and her mother escorted Ellen to

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a bedroom and there she lay down, white and dry-eyed, with her hands over her aching temples.

"I can't stay to the dinner," she said. "I must get home as soon as possible. I'm afraid I'm going to be ill. Oh, forgive me for being so much trouble!"

The Edwards' automobile was made ready at once, but Ellen absolutely refused to let Anne go back with her.

"I'll be all right, once I get to town," she said, "and the maid can take care of me."

A knock sounded on the door of the bedroom. It was a page with a note addressed to Ellen. She tore it open.

"Dear Miss Tabb," it began. "Please let me see you for a moment."

"It's a note from Mr. Clark," said Ellen, forcing a pitiful smile. "Naturally he's worried about me. Please tell him that it

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isn't his fault at all, and that I can't see him, as I am going immediately back to town."

Half an hour later she started for the Edmonds' house in the motor-car, Mrs. Edmonds going with her. Her head ached so that she could not think straight. She simply leaned back in the wide leather seat of the car, not attempting to talk, and feeling the last touch of humiliation in the warm-hearted sympathy and constant attentions of Mrs. Edmonds. On one point her mind was made up. She would go back to Metropolis the next day, and nothing should stop her.

In the morning her headache was over; but in order to make her plea of illness more plausible as well as to avoid embarrassing questions, she did not get up, but ate her breakfast in bed. Anne brought in the tray herself, bringing with it several letters and a big box of flowers. On top

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of the roses lay a note, and as Ellen read it her cheeks flushed.

"MY DEAR MISS TABB: I have no apologies or explanations to offer for my stupidity of yesterday. I only know that it has given me courage to say now what otherwise I must have delayed for months. I love you. I will not admit that what I said yesterday has made it impossible for you to love me. If you go away without seeing me, I shall follow you. I will not let anything come between us. In two days I have learned what I want most in the world. I am willing to wait twenty years to get it—but please don't make me wait that long.

"JOHN CLARK."

No wonder that Ellen's cheeks burned and that she was unable to answer Anne's half-laughing, half-sympathetic inquiries! The startling note left her almost breathless, and only strengthened her determination to go back to Metropolis on the first train. She would not trust herself to an-

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swer John Clark's note in her present state of mind. She was uncertain whether she should look at it as an insult or a tremendous compliment.

To gain time she laid the note down on the little table by her bedside and picked up the next letter. It came from Will Baldwin, in response to her request that he should let her know how things went during her absence. It was a polite and formal announcement of the temporary opening of the kindergarten for the factory children. The third letter was from her mother, giving the household gossip and the news of the young people at Metropolis.

At two o'clock that afternoon, in spite of the remonstrances of Anne Edmonds and her mother, Ellen insisted on taking the train for home, declaring that she felt perfectly able to travel alone. She could not stay a moment longer in this tangle of conflicting issues.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MUTINY

**W**HEN her daughter reached home, Mrs. Tabb was genuinely alarmed. Ellen had decided on the train that she would tell her mother everything that had happened, but when it came to the point she could not find the courage. It seemed a cowardly thing, at best, to repeat to her mother the cruel and savage things which Clark had said about her father, and, either with or without that confession, his note seemed an impossible and incredible thing. In the end she simply took refuge behind the story of a sudden attack of illness, and Mrs. Tabb sent immediately for the family physician. He



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was unable to find any symptoms indicative of a specific complaint and, with an air of grave wisdom, made the prescription usual in cases of that kind, when the pocketbook of the patient permits.

"Send Ellen away for a month at the seashore," he told Mrs. Tabb. "She is worn out and needs rest. There is nothing serious the matter with her."

Ellen's aunt, Mrs. Harlan, had a cottage on the Maine coast, and Mrs. Tabb wired at once, asking if her daughter might come down there to spend several weeks.

It was a relief to the girl to find, as she had expected, that her father had gone to the factory for the day. She dreaded to see him again after what had happened.

As for Thomas Tabb, his work was cut out for him that day. On his desk when he got down he found the telegram which Fritz Schmidt had sent from Pierson City to the down-town office of Rixton, the

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Wireless Motor's attorney. It was sufficiently startling.

"They've started to send them out already, have they?" said Thomas Tabb. "They came near catching us asleep that time. You've notified some one to go to South Harvey and get that machine Snooks & Davis are getting for us, I suppose?"

"Yes," said the lawyer. "I wired Bliss to run out from the Chicago office and stay there until he gets it."

Thomas Tabb pressed another button as the lawyer left his room. It rang a bell in the "knockout department," a name which fittingly describes the duties of the half dozen expert salesmen whose business it was to jump about all over the country and block sales made by competitors of the Wireless Motor Company. Morgan came into the president's office in response to the ring. He was the chief of the knockers-

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out—a tall, broad-shouldered young man, with a projecting jaw and cold blue eyes.

“Here’s a couple of jobs for you, Morgan,” said the old man. “The International people have shipped wireless motors to Riley & Company, Osterman, Michigan, and to R. T. Brooks, Sioux City, Iowa. Both were sent last night by American Express. It is extremely important that the acceptance of both these machines be prevented. Go as far as you have to. If necessary, give each of these people one of our new machines. Don’t let either of the International motors get into use. If you can get hold of them, ship them here to the factory as quickly as possible.”

Morgan had hardly gone out when in came a boy with a long telegram in cipher from Livingstone, the diplomat who had been sent to Pierson City to give the directors of the International “a dose of gloom.” Translated, it read as follows:

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"International people have perfected absolutely automatic wireless motor. Stockholders' meeting Thursday to increase capital by two million and push new automatic. Our people here badly scared. Say can't fight successfully unless we have automatic on the market ourselves. I have appointment with International directors for Wednesday before their meeting. Have promised to show them our automatic then. Absolutely necessary to have our automatic here by that time in good working order. Also send copies of our automatic patents.

"LIVINGSTONE."

Thomas Tabb's eyebrows dropped down until they almost covered his restless gray eyes.

"This is going to be a fight to the finish," he said.

Just then his private secretary opened the door of the office. "Carlson would like to see you," he said.

Carlson came in. He was a short, heavily whiskered Swede. Originally a loco-

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motive engineer, he had invented certain devices useful in the manufacture of wireless motors. One of the patents taken out in his name covered an attachment which had much to do with making wireless motors commercially useful. On condition of assigning his patent to the Wireless Motor Company, he had been given a life engagement as head of one of the experimental departments of the company at a salary of fifty dollars per week.

"Well, Carlson," said Thomas Tabb. "I was just going to send for you. What's the matter?"

"My three best men are going to quit me this week," he said. "I don't know why they quit."

"I do," answered the old man. "They've been hired away by the International Electric Appliance Corporation. How's your automatic wireless motor model working by this time?"

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"Fine," said Carlson, the enthusiasm of the dreamer in his eyes. "It's a wonderful machine. It will do——"

"Can you trust it alone? Will it be safe to send out to Pierson City by express?"

"It's all right, Mr. Tabb. Of course if a man tried to work it who didn't know how, he might get it balled up, but——"

"Yes, I see. Can you get ready to go out to Pierson City to-night and take the model with you?"

"Yes, sir."

"The cashier will have two hundred dollars ready for you. Now go and pack up the model. Don't let it out of your sight until you meet Livingstone in Pierson City."

The foreman of the iron foundry was waiting when Carlson left. His name was Radcliffe.

"Mr. Tabb," he said, apologetically, "the men want to know if you'll see their committee this morning."

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"Who's on the committee?"

Radcliffe named half-a-dozen men, half of them among the oldest and most conservative molders in the foundry, the others younger and less to be depended upon.

"Then there's Duggan," he concluded. "He's the chairman."

"Who's Duggan?"

"He's the district president of the Iron Molders' Union. He's also a member of the executive council of the International Union. He's come on here to try and settle things up."

"Oh, he has, has he?" snapped Thomas Tabb. "Send 'em right up."

Five minutes later the committee filed into the private office of the president. They were in their working clothes, unwashed and black with grime and sand. It was easy to see that the six local members were embarrassed and abashed. This was

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the first time any one of them had ever been in the president's office and their new surroundings were oppressive. Most of them hung their heads and looked sheepish. A foolish grin was on the faces of several of the younger men. It was plain that their dependence was on the mighty Duggan, who walked in advance. Duggan was a freckled young Irishman, with a red pompadour and a heavy red mustache. He had high cheek-bones and a heavy chin. His clothes were rough and his air was that of a bull-terrier looking for trouble.

Thomas Tabb swung around in his chair and faced them. He made no effort to make the committee feel at home. He looked squarely at Duggan and Duggan glared back at him. The rest of the committee cast down their eyes or looked expectantly at their champion.

"Well?" snapped out the old man.



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Duggan, whatever his faults, was quick to size up a situation. He read unpromising hostility in the eyes of Thomas Tabb, and took his cue accordingly.

"We come here, Mr. Tabb," he said, "to demand that you obey the rules of the Iron Molders' International Union and give your men an eight-hour day."

The other members of the committee started at this bold defiance, and grouped themselves together in an unconscious attitude of defense.

"Oh, you do, eh?" sneered Thomas Tabb. "Who do you happen to be, any way?"

The six local members of the committee shrank back, as if from a blow. But Duggan held his place. He even did more. The six workingmen caught their breath as they heard the agitator rip out an oath and step forward to the desk of the president of the Wireless Motor Company.

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Then with a dirty and sacrilegious fist he struck a heavy blow on the top of the desk and roared out his answer.

"I'll tell you who I am, by ——! I'm the authorized representative of the Iron Molders' International Union, and I'm here to demand—not to plead or to palter—that you recognize the union and obey its laws. I tell you, sir, by ——! the day has gone by when the capitalist can snap his finger in the face of the honest workingman."

Again the heavy fist came down bang on the top of the mahogany desk. The six members of the local committee straightened themselves and looked at Duggan, admiration in their eyes. This was magnificent. This defiance of what they had so long looked at as a sort of supernatural power was well worth paying monthly dues for.

Thomas Tabb pressed a button on his

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desk. His secretary stuck his head in at the door.

"I wish you'd telephone the police to come and remove this disorderly person from my office," he said in a low, even voice. The local committee looked alarmed. They began to eye the door anxiously.

"Mr. Tabb," went on Duggan, in an oratorical tone, "what is your answer?"

"I have no time to waste in talking to you," said Thomas Tabb. "You can go now or wait for the police to take you."

The local committee began to slip out of the room. Duggan turned and saw their retreat.

"Men," he called after them; but they were not to be stopped. His hat on the back of his head, he hurried after them. Thomas Tabb smiled. He knew that Duggan's loud profanity and noisy defi-

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ance were intended only to have an effect on the workmen. They would admire a leader who had the courage thus to beard the old lion in his den. And, as for the threatened strike, he had his plans already completed to block it.

He was surprised that evening when he reached the house to find that Ellen had returned so soon from Pierson City.

"What's the matter, Ellen?" he asked. And the girl, seeing the real concern in her father's eyes, felt an impulse to tell him everything that had happened, and beg him to tell her that it was all a lie. But something held her back.

"I was taken ill, father," she said, "and I thought I'd better come back home. Dr. Brownson says there is nothing serious the matter. He wants me to go to the seashore and rest for a month. Mother has telegraphed Aunt Jennie."

"That's a good plan," said Thomas  
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Tabb. "You do look tired out." Then he bent over and kissed her, and the girl felt hot tears come into her eyes.

After dinner the door-bell rang, and Ellen heard men's voices in the library below. Presently her mother came into the bedroom.

"Isn't Will Baldwin down-stairs?" Ellen asked. "I'm sorry I can't see him."

Her mother smiled.

"Oh, he didn't come to see you, dear," she said. "He didn't even know you were at home. I told him you were going to Maine to-morrow, and he was sorry, of course, to hear you were ill. He came to talk business with your father."

Down-stairs Will Baldwin and Thomas Tabb were sitting together at the front window of the library. Baldwin had just been told that Ellen had come home ill from Pierson City, and he was greatly worried and perplexed; but he stuck straight

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to the business which had brought him to the house.

"Mr. Tabb," he said, "I hear that the trouble began this afternoon."

Here, surely, was a persistent youth, thought the old man. Now for the second time he was venturing on forbidden ground. But now his call fell in well with Thomas Tabb's plans.

"Oh, I don't think there'll be any trouble, Mr. Baldwin. By the way, could you let me have the use of the church for an hour to-morrow afternoon? I'd like to get the people from the factory all together and talk over this proposed strike."

St. Mark's Chapel was located within half a block of the plant of the Wireless Motor Company. Some of the men and many of their families were regular attendants at the services, and Will Baldwin was anxious to be of use to them in every way in his power. It struck him that a

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meeting at the church would be a good thing.

"The chapel is at your service, sir," he said. "If you and the men can get together and talk matters over freely, I'm sure it will have a good effect. There's nothing like hearing both sides of a story."

"Exactly," said Thomas Tabb, dryly. He was ready to use anybody to accomplish his purposes, but he could see no sense in making his tools aware that they were about to be used.

Later that night Baldwin sent Ellen a note, expressing his sympathy with her in her illness, and his hope that a month's stay at the seashore would restore her to her usual good health and spirits. He made the note politely formal, because he had once for all made up his mind that his duty called him in another direction.

The next day Ellen started for her aunt's

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cottage at Harbor Point, Maine. In her berth on the sleeping-car she found a huge bunch of roses with the card of Sheldon, the manager of the Wireless Motor Company.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE MUTINY QUELLED

ON the morning of Ellen's departure for the East, Thomas Tabb had little typewritten notices struck off and sent to every department of the factory. They were all alike:

*"To all Employees:*

"The factory will shut down at 5.30 this afternoon, at which hour the whistle will blow, instead of at six o'clock, as usual. As soon as the whistle blows, all employees are requested to meet at St. Mark's Chapel, where matters of vital interest to all of us will be presented for their consideration.

THOMAS TABB,

"President Wireless Motor Company."

The posting of this notice started excited talk through the factory. When it came

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to the attention of Duggan, he urged his men in the foundry to pay no attention to it. He suspected a trick of some kind and tried hard to have them keep away. Other secret emissaries of various unions, scattered through the various departments, also exerted themselves to keep the men away. But most of the workmen were unorganized. None of them were anxious to have matters brought to a climax. They were all willing to avoid trouble if that were possible. Even in the iron foundry the older men, who had joined the union under compulsion, asserted themselves once more. They demanded that, before a strike was ordered, all hands should go and listen to what Thomas Tabb had to say. Duggan went to call on Will Baldwin. He wanted to know if the men would have anything to say at the meeting in the church.

"There'll certainly be fair play in my church," the minister answered. "After

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Mr. Tabb gets through talking, I don't see what's to prevent anybody else from getting up. My understanding with Mr. Tabb is that he and the men shall talk it over freely between them."

Meanwhile Thomas Tabb carefully completed his plans. He sent for half-a-dozen trusted foremen, and through them arranged that a couple of hundred men who could be entirely relied upon should occupy the front seats at the chapel meeting. That done, he waited the hour, with entire confidence.

The big chapel was packed ten minutes after the factory whistles blew at 5.30 o'clock. Then Thomas Tabb walked up to the platform from the rear and turned to face the fifteen hundred men present. Never did he appear to better advantage. His first glance showed him that the front seats had been properly packed. He was cool and half-smiling.

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"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "six weeks ago I was offered five millions of dollars in cash for my controlling interest in the Wireless Motor Company. I am sixty-four years old, and five millions of dollars is a lot of money. The income from it at four per cent. would be two hundred thousand dollars a year. I haven't got any son to leave my business to, and there don't seem to be any good reason why I should not retire and enjoy myself for the rest of my life.

"My offer comes from the trust which already almost controls the electric-motor business of the country. Their plan is to buy out this plant and shut it down. That of course would throw all the four thousand people who work in our factory out of a job.

"The offer has been a big temptation to me. We are fighting some particularly nasty competition now, and I could avoid

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all that trouble and possible loss by simply accepting the five millions which is waiting for me.

"I have been hesitating for weeks whether I should accept or decline the offer. But I've sort of hated to think about turning all you people out of a job for good and all. Some of you have worked for me for twenty years and we've always got along well together. So, against my own wishes and my own best interests, my doctor tells me, I decided only last Saturday that I would refuse the offer; that I would keep on running the factory, fighting competition and furnishing steady work for all you men."

Cheers broke out all over the crowded church, but Thomas Tabb waved his hand for silence. He advanced to the front of the platform and spoke in a shrill and impressive voice.

"But that don't mean," he said, "that I  
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am not still free to change my mind and accept the offer after all. Yesterday a committee from the iron foundry visited me in my office. It was headed by a perfect stranger, a man I had never seen before in my life. He cursed me, almost splintered my desk with his fist, and demanded I don't know what. He said he spoke for the workmen in the factory. I ordered him out and sent for the police.

"Now all I've got to say is this: I am willing to stick; to devote my days and nights to running this business and fighting outside competition. But if there is to be competition inside the factory as well as outside it, then I shall quit and let the trust nail shut the doors and windows of my plant.

"I've got to give my final answer to the men who make the offer to-morrow evening. Go home now and think over what I have told you. If you have anything to

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say to me on the subject, you'll have to say it before noon to-morrow. That's all."

The instant Thomas Tabb finished, arose the hoarse voice of Duggan trying to push his way up from the back of the church. But the two hundred men on the front seats were up first. They turned and started to move out of the church. The others followed their lead. Duggan raged vainly against the sound of a thousand excited voices, all talking at once, and the added racket of the men clattering out into the street.

Will Baldwin felt an impulse to get up and demand that the men wait and listen to the other side of the question. Thomas Tabb had tricked him. He had not intended for an instant that both sides should be heard. He had agreed to the proposition that there should be a full and free discussion, and had led him (Baldwin) to deceive Duggan when the agitator had

## THE MUTINY QUELLED

come to ask that there be fair play. The minister hurried up to the platform, where Thomas Tabb sat back in an arm-chair, quietly watching the crowd disperse.

"I thought we were to hear both sides of the case, Mr. Tabb?" he said, somewhat hotly.

"There's only one side to this case, Mr. Baldwin," answered the old man. "And I wouldn't advise you to bother about it at all. I simply won't have a labor union in my factory."

Next morning when Thomas Tabb reached his office there was a committee of a dozen men, representing all the departments in the factory, waiting to see him. They came into the old man's office quietly and respectfully, caps in hand.

"Well, boys," said Thomas Tabb.

Old Fred Bailey, a gray-haired tool-maker, was their spokesman.

"We've come, sir," he said, "to tell you



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that there won't be any more trouble in this factory if we can help it."

"Where's Duggan?"

"He took the morning train back to New York, sir," answered Bailey. Some of the other men grinned sheepishly. What was the use of trying to oppose this sort of superhuman force, anyhow? was the thought in their minds.

"Where are Brackett and McMullen and Artz and Larsen?" persisted the old man.

The committee shrank as from the blow of a whip. He had named four organizers representing as many different unions who had been secretly working in the factory for weeks, and of whose identity even some of the committee were uncertain.

"Well, where are they?" persisted Thomas Tabb. "I've got to answer that offer to buy the factory before the whistle blows, and I sha'n't refuse it while those men are working here."

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he members of the committee whisked together in a corner of the room.

"They'll be gone by noon, sir," said Oldley, finally.

"Well, you come back here at twelve o'clock with their discharge tickets and bring them to me," said Thomas Tabb, wheeling around to his desk in dismissal.

That, at least, was settled, he felt sure.

He was free now to take up the more pressing problem of fighting the International Corporation. But before he changed the current of his thoughts completely, he called in Sheldon, the secretary, and gave verbal orders that all of the men who had been connected with Duggan on the committee in the iron foundry should be discharged from the company's service. They were to be "let go" one or two at a time, and by various pretexts, so as to avoid stirring up any talk.

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For several days now the wireless motor sold by the International Corporation to Snooks & Davis, South Harvey, Illinois, and bought by that firm for Fritz Schmidt, had been in the factory of the Wireless Motor Company. The patent attorneys of the company had examined it, and their report lay on the desk of Thomas Tabb.

"We find four of our patents infringed by this machine," said the report. "In five other details there is sufficient ground to justify a suit for infringement, for advertising purposes."

That was good as far as it went, and papers were at once drawn up for the first suit to be filed against the International Corporation asking for an injunction and damages. But Thomas Tabb was waiting impatiently for word from Livingstone, the gloomer, who was on the ground at Pier-son City. And Livingstone was living up

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is reputation as a smooth and resource-diplomat.

ate on the evening of the day he shed Pierson City he had met Fritz midt, and had heard from him the re: that the International had perfected automatic motor, which was something Wireless Company had been working or years. Schmidt also gave him other ortant and confidential information. t morning, with that perfect frankness ch is the most deceptive form of diplo-y, he had called on John Clark, the ident of the International Corporation, presented his card.

I have come here to persuade you not ttempt the manufacture of wireless mo-," he said. "We have the ground ab-tely covered."

I'm afraid you're too late, sir," answered k, with a smile.

You are banking on your automatic

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wireless, of course," returned Livingstone. "I am prepared to show you an automatic machine of that type which we have covered by fundamental patents."

The president of the International was surprised at this speech. He had thought that knowledge of the automatic motor was confined to the walls of his own factory. He showed his surprise in his face.

"I shall make it my business to call on each of your directors in the next few days," said Livingstone. "I shall also call upon as many of your principal stockholders as I have time to reach. To each of them I shall explain the difficulties which lie in your way. I am perfectly certain that you will fail in your attempt to invade our field, and I shall make that point clear to each of them. Mrs. Edmonds, I imagine, will not care to risk any large amount of money in a losing venture."

Already Livingstone apparently knew

## THE MUTINY QUELLED

that Mrs. Edmonds, widow of the former president of the International, still retained his large holdings, which made her the principal stockholder in the company. Clark knew, too, that Mrs. Edmonds was timid in matters of business.

"Of course," Livingstone went on calmly, "you anticipate that at the meeting of your directors on Thursday the matter will be definitely settled. But I fancy that I shall be able to do something between now and then."

Notices for that meeting had been sent out only the day before. John Clark could not imagine how word of its calling had so soon reached this apparently omniscient person.

"I'll tell you what," said Livingstone. "If you'll call a meeting of your directors to meet at our down-town office on Wednesday, the day before your stated meeting, I will promise not to call on any of them or

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on any of your stockholders before that time. We may as well play fair with each other. If I can show you that we are in a position to make the wireless motor business unprofitable for you, I judge you are business man enough to keep out of it."

The president of the International Corporation thought a moment. If this man was to talk to his directors, he preferred that they should be together at the time. There was strength in numbers, and it would be easier for him to guide and govern them.

"I'll go you on that proposition," he said.

## CHAPTER SIX

### A FAIR PRIZE

THE next Sunday Will Baldwin, being an impetuous young man and not what would be called a "discreet pastor," got up in his pulpit and preached a sermon on the virtue of fair play. He tried hard to avoid any personal bias, taking the broad ground that in every controversy each party had an equal and inherent right to be heard freely and fully.

"To strangle free speech," he said, "is violence as dangerous as to burn a building. A tyrant is a tyrant, whether he be one- or hydra-headed."

He further announced that on succeeding Sunday evenings he would deliver a



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series of preludes on "Some Follies of Labor and Some Sins of Capital."

There were those among his hearers who found no trouble in making a personal application of what the young preacher had said. When news of the sermon and of the series announced to succeed it reached the ears of Thomas Tabb, his thin lips shut together in a straight line, like the jaws of a steel trap. The annual meeting of St. Mark's parish was to be held on the next Tuesday evening, and Thomas Tabb, who left nothing to chance, knew, without referring to his records, that the year for which the Rev. Will Baldwin had been engaged as rector expired at the same time. He decided on the instant that Baldwin must not be engaged again. It was not that the minister had displayed what he regarded as a decidedly socialistic tendency—that was bad enough—but his cardinal sin was that he showed a disinclination to be guided

## A FAIR PRIZE

and governed by the indirect suggestions and hints of Thomas Tabb. Tabb's temper was dictatorial. He thrust out his tentacles in every direction, and those who came in contact with him must obey or be crushed. Independence of spirit was a trait of character he did not admire. Besides, there were other reasons why he would be as well satisfied to have Will Baldwin out of the way.

Will Baldwin must go, and it was characteristic of Thomas Tabb that he did not delay an instant in putting the necessary machinery to work. In one way or another he held power which was sufficient to force the action of the vestrymen and warden of St. Mark's Chapel.

The annual meeting was held, and Will Baldwin, startled and humiliated, heard the announcement of the vote which severed his connection with the parish of St. Mark's. No reasons were given for the

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action, and when the short meeting was over the members of the vestry slipped away, as if anxious to avoid the deposed rector. But he was determined to discover the cause of his dismissal. He felt it his right to know. Later in the same evening he called at the house of the senior warden, who, in spite of the fact that he and Baldwin had been intimate and confidential in their work together, received him with evident timidity.

At first the warden evaded the minister's questions. Finally he broke down before the young man's indignant insistence.

"I'll tell you, Mr. Baldwin," he said, "though it will cost me my job if it ever gets out. Thomas Tabb is responsible for your dismissal. He forced us to it against the will of every man on the vestry."

"Why, how is that possible?" demanded the young preacher. "He is not even a member of our church. Are you men

## A FAIR PRIZE

dogs that must come when he whistles you to heel?"

"We are pretty near that, Mr. Baldwin," answered the gray-haired warden, with eyes cast down. "Three members of the vestry are foremen in his factory. If we disobeyed him he would think nothing of discharging every one of us on one pretext or another. And he wouldn't stop there. He would hound us after we left his employ. You don't know the man."

"I won't stand it!" burst out Will Baldwin. "I'll——"

"No," said the warden; "anything you can do would only get us into more trouble. I don't know what hold he has on the other four that voted against you, but I did know the minute I called the vestry meeting to order that seven of the nine members were under the same orders. I could tell it by the very way they looked."

"It's damnable!" said the minister hotly.

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"Yes, it *is* damnable, and I have put myself entirely in your power by telling you the truth about it. I thought you had a right to know. But if you make any fuss about it, it'll be all up with me."

There was no use in making further inquiries. Will Baldwin walked home with his teeth and his fists clenched, and the big muscles in his shoulders tightened until they were ready to snap. He would catch this human spider and choke him to death, so ridding the world of a monster.

Next morning his head was cooler, though the humiliation of his sudden and unexplained dismissal was even more bitter than it had been the night before. He packed his trunks and his books, paid what few small bills he owed, and decided to take the first train for the State capital to call on the bishop of the diocese. To that kindly and wise old man he felt he could and must tell the whole shameful story,

## A FAIR PRIZE

certain that it would be buried in a deep memory and equally certain that the bishop would be able to lay the right course for him through all the rocks and reefs which filled the way. It seemed impossible for him to call on any of his former parishioners and bid them good-by. What could he say? If they knew the truth and were in the conspiracy of silence, the interview could only be embarrassing and painful on both sides; if they were ignorant of the facts, the humiliation, on his side at least, would be even deeper. He did not feel called on to do it.

He wrote a few farewell notes to those in the parish who had been nearest to him in his work. One of them was Ellen Tabb, who, as he knew, was visiting her aunt at Harbor Point.

"Dear Miss Tabb," he wrote. "I am unexpectedly leaving Metropolis and St. Mark's Church for good and all. I don't

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know where I'm going, so I can't tell you. I am sorry you are not at home, but I can't go without sending you a word of good-by. The pleasantest memory of my year here will always be connected with you. I wish you every joy in life."

That was all. He mailed his letters and got on the train.

A few days later Ellen Tabb, sitting on the veranda of her aunt's cottage in the sunshine and looking out over the waves which came rolling in from the east, received the letter in a bundle of mail. It was a tremendous shock to her. So short—so formal! He had not even thought it worth while to tell her why he was going. It was plainly his intention that all acquaintance between them should cease. Well, there was certainly nothing she could do about it. Her pride sprang to arms. She tore the note into little bits and threw the pieces up into the air. The breeze

## A FAIR PRIZE

caught them and in an instant they were scattered over the surface of the water.

"Good-by," she called gaily, and threw a kiss after them. "Good-by, Will Baldwin."

That evening she wrote to her mother and demanded to know the reason for the minister's sudden departure. But Mrs. Tabb knew no more about the real facts in the case than the majority of her neighbors. She was only able to say that the vestry had failed to re-engage him, and that he had left Metropolis in a fit of anger, without even bidding good-by to his friends.

"We were all surprised," Mrs. Tabb wrote. "His foolish pique was a great disappointment."

The day she reached Harbor Point Ellen had written a long letter of apology and explanation to Anne Edmonds. John Clark, whose inquiries after her were con-



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stant, had been told of her going to the seashore, and the same mail which brought Will Baldwin's farewell letter brought also a note from him.

"Dear Miss Tabb," he wrote. "I have just learned where you are, and I leave to-night for Harbor Point. After I have come across half the continent to see you, you will not refuse me an interview, even if it is only for a moment."

She was undecided. If it had been possible she would have telegraphed him not to come. But what right had she to order his comings and goings? To tell him to stay at home would certainly display a decided interest in him. There was nothing to do but to wait. Then when he called she could refuse to see him.

After dinner two evenings later the maid came into the library, where Ellen and her aunt were sitting.

"Mr. John Clark to see Miss Tabb," she

## A FAIR PRIZE

said; and Ellen, with a start, realized that the crisis was come. It seemed impossible to send him away, now that he was actually in the house. She had supposed that, after reaching the village, he would send a note asking permission to call.

"You may tell Mr. Clark that I will see him in a moment," she answered. Ellen hurried up to her room. She dreaded the coming interview greatly. She was sure it would be a painful one. But she did not neglect to put on her most becoming dress and to see that her beautiful hair was properly arranged before she started downstairs.

John Clark stood looking out of a window over the ocean when she entered the reception-room. He turned as she came in, and instantly she felt that subtle sense of power which the man carried with him. He started toward her with outstretched hands, crying, "Ellen!"

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"Mr. Clark," she said, half in alarm. But this tall man with the shining eyes was not to be denied. He came over to where she stood and took one of her hands.

"Ellen," he repeated, "I am glad I said what I did about your father. It has given me the courage to say that I love you, without waiting. I called him a scoundrel. So he is—in business. But he has been a good father to you, and you love him. He will call me worse names. They will be true—in business. But I will be good to you and you must learn to love me. Business is business—but this is life—this is love."

"This is unheard of—this is incredible!" said Ellen Tabb.

"So is my love for you," he answered, boldly.

"How dare you speak to me of——"

"I dare do anything," he interrupted.

"What has happened shall not come be-

## A FAIR PRIZE

tween us. I will give up business. I am a rich man even now. I want only one thing in the world, and that is you!"

"Mr. Clark," said Ellen, drawing away her hand and speaking in a voice which she forced to be calm, her eyes on the window, "I can not talk to you. You must go away. I must not see you again."

"No," he said, "I shall not go away. You must see me again. If you leave me now, I shall come back to-morrow."

"Good-by, Mr. Clark," she said, holding out her hand. "And please don't try to see me again."

He bent over and kissed it. "Until to-morrow, then," he said, and went out into the hall.

But in the morning came, instead, a note.

"Ellen," he wrote, "I am called back to Pierson City to protect our property from another of your father's attacks. The buc-

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caneers of old ravaged the Spanish Main and brought back galleons filled with gold and plate to lay at the feet of their lady-loves. And if I am a buccaneer, I am also yours. Expect me the minute the fight is over."

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

ON Wednesday morning Carlson, the inventor, and his model of the automatic wireless motor reached Pierson City. Livingstone met them at the railroad station and escorted them directly to the office of Jordan, the wireless agent at Pierson City.

"The directors of the International Corporation meet here at two o'clock this afternoon," he said, "and it's noon now. I want you to get that model set up and running before you do another thing."

In the big back room of the office Carlson set to work. As carefully as if he had been undressing a sleeping baby he took the packing case off his precious model.

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"There," he said, with a proud sigh.

"Now let's see you make it work," said Livingstone.

The inventor grasped a certain small lever and pressed it down, a smile of expectancy on his face. Nothing moved. The smile changed to a worried look. He poked around in the cog-wheels and dogs and ratchets which made up the mechanism.

"What's the matter?" said Livingstone.

"She seems to be balled up," said Carlson, slowly. He looked up from the table with a scared stare.

"I can't make her run," he said.

Jordan, the Pierson City agent, stuck his head in at the door. "There are some of the International people out here," he said.

"Keep them there a minute," answered Livingstone. Then he sat down in a chair by the table and covered his face with his hands.

## A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

"Put your model back in the packing-case," he said finally, without looking up. Carlson obeyed.

"Put it down on the floor. Now bring me an ax."

Astonishment written on his face, Carlson went over into a corner of the room and brought back an ax. Livingstone got up, swung the ax up over his shoulder, and brought it down with a crash on one corner of the packing-case. The wood broke and splintered. The heavy back of the ax blade went on through into the delicate machinery. Carlson groaned aloud and sprang forward to interfere.

"Don't be alarmed," said Livingstone, with a smile on his face. "Lift the whole thing up there on the table and cover it with that velvet cloth. Now go out to the front office and tell Jordan to show those International people in. I'm ready for them."



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Jordan, the agent of the Wireless Motor Company at Pierson City, threw open the door leading to the rear office, where Livingstone was waiting with the broken model, and ushered in President Clark, of the International, and four other men.

"Mr. Livingstone, gentlemen," he said.

Livingstone, apostle of gloom, rose up smiling and shook hands with each of the visitors. He called each of them by name and asked them to take seats.

"We may as well light a cigar while we're waiting for Andrews," he said, passing his cigar-case. Andrews was the only member of the International Directorate who was not present, and the others looked at each other in surprise that this stranger should have so quickly noticed his absence.

"Andrews won't be here," said President Clark.

"That's too bad," returned Livingstone. "I thought he came back from the East

## A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

last night on purpose to attend our meeting. Well, we may as well go ahead.

"I want to persuade you men not to go into the wireless motor business," began Livingstone, leaning forward in his chair. "I am not here to make any bluffs or threats. I'll put the case before you in just a purely business way, that's all. You are banking on your new automatic wireless motor. We own the fundamental patents which absolutely control the making of wireless motors of any type. More than that, we've perfected an absolutely automatic wireless of our own."

Livingstone stepped over and lifted the blue velvet cover from the shattered packing-case which contained Carlson's model. As the International directors saw the crushed corner of the box they sat up with renewed attention.

"I left the packing-case on," said Livingstone, "because I wanted you to see just

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what has happened to the machine since it left our factory. It was shipped from Metropolis last Monday evening in perfect condition. You can see what shape it is in now. The corner of the box has been crushed in and some of the machinery damaged. I thought at first that the express messengers or drivers were responsible for it, but when you look at it closely it seems more likely that somebody has hit it a blow with an ax. The box was delivered at this office less than two hours ago, and there has been no time yet for an investigation.

“However, there is our automatic model. There is plenty of it left for purposes of explanation. I’ll ask our Mr. Carlson to show you how it works.”

The old inventor lovingly explained the working of his motor, while the International directors gathered about to listen. He was so affected by the damage done

## A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

his precious model that even the hostile listeners felt sorry in sympathy for him. As he finished, the crafty Livingstone got to his feet, and, in order to forestall possible embarrassing inquiries, made a startling statement.

"On the third of this month," he said, "you shipped the first three wireless automatics that were built in your shops."

Livingstone named the day on which Fritz Schmidt had seen the packing-cases on the shipping platform, and the International people looked at each other in astonishment. But Livingstone went on quickly.

"They were built by hand and you are waiting to see how they stand up before having the tools made. You have not, therefore, made any large investment as yet. I want to show you why it will be to your interest not to make one.

"Here are five patents." He held up a

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sheaf of papers. "No wireless motor can be built without infringing every one of them. I wish Mr. Lawrence would look them over and report to your board whether or not I am telling the truth."

He handed the patent papers to one of the men present.

"I invited only your directors to attend this meeting," he went on, "but I am glad you brought your patent attorney along. He will be able to look at the situation in an unprejudiced light."

Livingstone smiled knowingly. President Clark flushed and the other International people looked uneasy. This emissary of the enemy seemed to know everything.

"I have also to say that one of those three automatic models shipped from your factory has been in the hands of our patent attorneys and experts for some time. They report"—he referred to a memorandum in

## A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

his hand—"that it infringes no less than nine of our patents. Papers have been prepared asking for an injunction and damages against your company on account of one of these infringements, but I have asked that they be not filed until I should have this opportunity to talk with you.

"Gentlemen, the Wireless Motor Company is prepared to fight for the control of the wireless motor business—but it doesn't want to fight. We'll leave you alone in the monopoly of the ordinary motor business. We ask in return that you keep your hands off that little part of the business that belongs to us.

"What have you to say, Mr. Clark?" concluded Livingstone, abruptly, sitting down in his chair.

"I am sure we thank Mr. Livingstone for this chance to see his model and hear his statement," said the president of the International. "Our directors meet to-

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morrow afternoon, and I think by evening we shall be able to give Mr. Livingstone an answer to his proposition."

He looked round at the other directors, and they nodded in assent.

"By the way," said Livingstone, as the visitors rose to go, "we shall be glad to buy your wireless and automatic patents, if you have any, at an agreed price."

Clark nodded, with a half-smile on his face. "Thank you," he said.

"Before we break up," went on Livingstone, "I want to say that I am authorized to invite all the members of your board to visit our plant at Metropolis. We will throw everything open to your inspection."

Again the directors of the International looked at each other in astonishment.

"I have taken the liberty of engaging a private car that will leave Pierson City for Metropolis on next Thursday evening," concluded the gloomer. "That car will be

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at the disposal of your directors and of any others whom you may invite to go with you. We have nothing to hide, even from possible competitors."

The meeting with Livingstone left President Clark in a critical position. He was determined on aggressive action against the Wireless Motor Company.

Two of the remaining four members of the board of directors, young men like himself, sided with him. These three personally controlled about thirty-five per cent. of the stock of the company. They were opposed by two older directors, relics of the administration of Edmonds, the original president of the International, whose widow was still its largest stockholder. The two conservatives owned or represented practically the same amount of stock as that held by the Clark faction. The balance of power was, accordingly, in the hands of Mrs. Edmonds, whose allegi-



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ance was always more or less a matter of doubt.

Knowing that a majority of the board was with him, Clark was careful not to force any radical action through the directors' meeting on the afternoon following Livingstone's speech. In his own mind he had already decided to push the wireless automatic business, but he did not care to bring on a crisis in his own board.

Accordingly he contented himself with first declaring the regular semi-annual dividend of three per cent. on the stock of the company. Then he asked for a statement from Lawrence, the patent attorney.

"I'm perfectly familiar with the patents Livingstone produced with such a flourish," said Lawrence. "I don't think our wireless automatic infringes any one of them. On the other hand, their motors, in my opinion, infringe several of our patents. The chances are better than even for a

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final decision in our favor all along the line. If we should go into a legal fight with them it would certainly last six or eight years. We have ten millions capital to their one, and it might easily happen, before a final decision was reached, that the Wireless Company would be broke and would be glad to settle at our own terms."

"At any rate," interrupted Clark, before an objection could be made, "there is no need of our taking any positive action at this time. Let's wait and see what developments. What do you say about accepting Livingstone's invitation to visit Metropolis?"

One of the conservative members of the board said that it might be the part of wisdom to accept, and see what sort of an institution they were called upon to fight—a suggestion with which President Clark immediately fell in.

"We will all go," he said, "and look over

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the ground together. In the mean time our interests will be thoroughly protected. Three of the leading experts from the experimental rooms of the Wireless Company have just entered our employ, and we have made other arrangements that will keep us fully informed of any important developments."

"I don't know about that sort of thing, Clark," said one of the older directors. "It doesn't sound to me like a fair way of meeting competition."

"That's because you are not familiar with the methods of the Wireless Company," answered the president. "Nowadays you have to fight the devil with fire. If there is no other business, we will adjourn."

Clark, determined on a fight, immediately issued orders to have the full force of the tool-room turned onto the making of tools for the manufacture of automatic

## A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

wireless motors. That would take at least two months. In the mean time he ordered that twenty machines be built by hand, and issued instructions to his agents all over the country to take as many orders for wireless automatics as they could get.

"By the time the old boys get round to making a decision on this subject," he said to himself, "they'll find that the decision has already been made and it'll be too late to back out."

That evening he went to call on Mrs. Edmonds. He was afraid that Livingstone had already called on her, and he knew how easily she was influenced. In business matters she depended entirely upon her advisers and paid small attention to details. He was greatly surprised to find, as a result of cautious inquiries, that no attempt had been made to approach her. He made up his mind at once not to enlighten her as to Ellen Tabb's relationship

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with the head of the rival company. That could do no good from the standpoint of business, and, madly in love with the girl as he was, he was anxious to keep her as far apart as possible from all this tangle of jarring interests.

Clark presently discovered that Mrs. Edmonds knew nothing at all of the tumult that the appearance of the gloomer had made in the ranks of the International. So, as tactfully and discreetly as possible, he took advantage of the opportunity to put the case before her in its most favorable light. He promised her greatly increased dividends as a result of the new automatic wireless business, and they laughed together at the effrontery of the little Western company in trying to scare the great International off the track.

"They are great bluffers," Clark said. "They'll be sending you all sorts of newspapers and notices of suits and counter-

## A SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

suits. They may even send a man to your house to try to scare you. But you needn't worry. Just refer them to me. I think you can trust me to look after your business interests, Mrs. Edmonds."

Clark went home that evening well satisfied with himself. At the same time he was puzzled to understand why the shrewd Livingstone had so long neglected to "go after" Mrs. Edmonds. It was a tactical error he could not understand. He would have been less satisfied and even more puzzled if he had been aware of certain telegrams that had passed between Livingstone in Pierson City and President Thomas Tabb at Metropolis.

Immediately after the meeting of the directors in the office of the Wireless agent at Pierson City, Livingstone had sent a long cipher telegram to President Tabb. He had gathered from what had passed at the meeting, and from reports made by

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Schmidt and other secret agents, that the directors of the International Corporation were divided into two factions, and that Mrs. Edmonds held the balance of power. He wired Tabb also that Clark and the majority of the directors were not to be frightened, and that the Wireless Company was in for the fight of its life.

Tabb had wired back instructing him to make every effort to bring all the officers and directors of the International to Metropolis with him on the special car.

"Give Mrs. Edmonds a big dose of gloom," the message concluded. "She is the weak point."

Next morning, just as Livingstone was starting from his hotel to call on Mrs. Edmonds, a second telegram from Tabb was delivered to him.

"Don't go near Mrs. Edmonds under any circumstances," it said.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### A FEEBLE DEFENSE

**W**HEN Thomas Tabb went home the evening after receiving Livingstone's report from Pier-son City, he found his wife and two other women busy with a mass of papers in the dining-room.

"Well, what's up now?" he laughed.

"Oh, we're preparing the program for the meeting of the State Federation," answered Mrs. Tabb, and her husband passed on into the library with an indulgent and patronizing smile.

After dinner that evening she asked him if he would listen to a reading of the program and tell her what he thought of it.



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Now Mr. Tabb was far from being interested in the proceedings of women's clubs, but, like an indulgent husband, he consented and sat down in an armchair, while his wife read off, first of all, the list of officers in charge of the various sections.

"Industrial Section," read Mrs. Tabb, "National Chairman, Mrs. Eliza A. Edmonds, of Pierson City."

Thomas Tabb suddenly sat up straight in his chair.

"Why, that's where Ellen was visiting, isn't it?" he said. "Is Mrs. Edmonds going to be here for the meeting?"

"Yes," answered his wife. "We expect most of the national chairmen."

"Ah," said Thomas Tabb, a curious look in his eyes.

"That sounds like a very interesting program," he said, when his wife had finished. "By the way, why don't you ask some of the visitors from out of the State

## A FEEBLE DEFENSE

to visit you during the meeting? Mrs. Edmonds, for instance?"

"I'll sit right down and invite her this minute," said his wife, overjoyed that her husband had at last begun to take some interest in her club work.

Whereupon Thomas Tabb went out into the hall, called a messenger on the telephone, and sent his second telegram to Livingstone in Pierson City.

The same evening Mrs. Tabb wrote her regular letter to Ellen at Harbor Point.

"Your father is very busy," she wrote. "His business seems to take more and more of his time, instead of less, as I have so long hoped. Next week the State Federation of Women's Clubs meets in Metropolis, and I suppose we shall have a lively time. Mrs. Edmonds, of Pierson City, is chairman of the Industrial Section, and I have written asking her to spend the

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week with us. If you were at home I should ask Anne to come, too."

With John Clark out of the way, Ellen had plenty of time in those long summer days on the seashore to consider her situation. She was glad of the quiet, for the succession of shocks she had experienced during the last few weeks had left her mentally breathless.

There was Will Baldwin! She smiled a little bitterly as she thought of him. Her pride had been stung by the curt and formal way in which he had bidden her good-by. At least he, she reflected, could not be considered as complicating matters. He had taken himself out of the web for good and all, with a jerk which had left some broken and tangled ends. But, at any rate, he was gone.

John Clark was another proposition. She was afraid of him—there was no denying that. How was one to fight against

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such a man, who seemed to delight in doing unheard-of and impossible things? She half smiled as she thought of the absurdity of the situation. But Clark, himself, was not at all absurd. He was, on the other hand, terrifying and compelling. She would never see him again. But how could she be sure of it?

Nothing seemed to make any difference to the man. He knocked over all the conventions and came straight for what he wanted with a strength and a determination which frightened her. At the same time she admired him for these same qualities. It was impossible not to admire such a masterful man. She must simply avoid seeing him. That was the only safe plan.

From home she heard nothing of importance, until her mother's letter came which announced the impending visit of Mrs. Edmonds. Ellen clenched her fingers on that letter. Was there to be no end to the

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miserable complications growing out of her visit to Pierson City? Now, of course, Mrs. Edmonds would learn for herself that her father was the president of the company which was trying to drive the International Corporation to the wall. She felt an impulse to write and tell her mother that Mrs. Edmonds must not come to their home. But on what ground could she put such a strange request? No, she could do nothing. She felt tied, hand and foot; forced to sit motionless and watch events work themselves out. Then there was John Clark! He knew both sides of the miserable story. He was fighting her father to the death, and he had declared that he was coming back again to make love to her. Oh, if there were only some one in whom she might confide and of whom she might ask advice! But every door seemed closed to her. There were a dozen reasons why she must remain silent.

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Again came the impulse to run away somewhere and get away from it all.

The next day was Saturday, and about noon there came a telegram from her uncle, Henry Harlan, who wired from his office in Boston that he would bring home a friend to spend Sunday at the Harbor Point cottage. The telegram was delivered to Mrs. Harlan, who mentioned casually to Ellen that Mr. Harlan was bringing a business friend home with him for the week end. There seemed nothing in that to specially interest her. Perhaps the presence of a stranger might be even a relief from the thoughts which puzzled and tormented her.

That evening Ellen took a long nap. She was asleep when the cart drove up, bringing Mr. Harlan and his guest from the station. Later she dressed for dinner. She was on her way down-stairs when she heard a strange voice in the drawing-room

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and recognized it. It was a shock, but it was impossible to turn back now. She took her courage in her hands and went on into the drawing-room. John Clark rose up smiling to meet her.

"Well, Miss Ellen," he said, holding out his hand, "I stole a march on you this time. When I called last week," he went on to Mrs. Harlan, still holding Ellen's hand, "she forbade me to come back again. But I refused to obey."

Ellen felt herself blushing hotly. Here was this man giving public notice that he was her lover, and that, in spite of herself, he was determined to win her. She hated herself and him at the same time. But she quickly forced herself to answer him as lightly as he had spoken. At the same time she caught her aunt and uncle exchanging a significant look. They were already, apparently, allied with John Clark against her.

At the dinner-table the conversation

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was general. At her aunt's suggestion the coffee was served on the big piazza overlooking the sea, and there presently Ellen found herself sitting alone with John Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Harlan having gone into the house.

She was furiously angry with them all, most of all with this big man who sat there smiling in the moonlight. But she felt it would be childish of her to run into the house herself and leave him there alone. In the first place it would be awkward to explain to her aunt. And John Clark was not to be met by simply avoiding him. He must be faced and the battle fought out sooner or later. Now was as good a time as another.

"Ellen," he said, "you are very angry with me."

"Mr. Clark," the girl answered, looking straight at him, "I think you are unpardonably rude and presumptuous."



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"I would be anything to win you," he declared, with a look in his eyes she could not meet.

"Can't you see what a false position you put me in?"

"Promise to be my wife," he said. "That is the position I want to put you in."

She got up, feeling herself helpless in the presence of his insistence, and turned to go into the house. But he interrupted.

"Ellen," he said, "what is the use of running away from me? It will do no good. Sit down and let me talk to you. If you will listen, I promise not to bring up the subject again without your permission."

She turned again and sat down. He was right. It was better to have it over once for all.

"Ellen," said John Clark, "I love you. Most of the things I have wanted in life

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are mine. I want you more than all of them put together. Everything has its price. I am ready to pay for it. I offer you my love—all I am, all I have, all I hope for."

"My father—" the girl began, but before she could go on John Clark was on his knees beside her there in the shadow of the cottage.

"What has he to do with it? You are a woman; I am a man. I love you! I love you!"

He seized one of her hands and kissed it passionately. Ellen started to rise, but he pulled her back to the chair roughly.

"Listen," he commanded. "What do I care for business? I will give it all up. We will go away together! What is there I can't get for you?"

He stretched out his great arms in a gesture of unconscious power.

Ellen was deeply moved. She felt her-

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self trembling. She dared not trust herself to speak. She must run away, after all. She could not face and resist this tremendous man. She sprang to her feet, but he clutched her hand again.

"Promise me!" he pleaded.

"I can't," the girl whispered. "Don't you know I can't? Let me go!"

"Promise!" he repeated. "Promise!"

"Oh, wait!—wait!—wait!" said Ellen, and slipped into the open door of the house.

Next morning at breakfast he and she were conventional and smiling. John Clark proposed a sail on the bay, and for hours the four glided back and forth inside the breakwater which shut off the long swell from the Atlantic. Then Clark, who was steering and handling the sails as well, set the nose of the little boat fairly into the teeth of the wind and went plunging out beyond the point of the cape,

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where they felt the full force of the ocean. Mrs. Harlan raised a cry of fear, but Clark smiled confidently as he answered.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "There isn't any danger. I was brought up on the great lakes, and I know the ways of a sail-boat as well as I do the handles of a plow."

He handled the little craft beautifully. She answered his lightest touch as if she recognized the hand of a master. It seemed to Ellen that it would be very good and pleasant to have always near her some great, strong man like this one, who would know how to meet and conquer every difficult situation.

In the afternoon, after luncheon, John Clark found her standing out on the porch, watching the waves.

"Ellen," he said, very calmly, "I am starting back to Pierson City in a few minutes. At least promise that you will write to me."

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"I will promise to do that, Mr. Clark," she said. "Good-by."

She held out her hand, and John Clark crushed it in his own great palm.

"Good-by, Ellen," he whispered. "Good-by, darling."

He turned and ran down the steps to the waiting dog-cart. Ellen hurried into the house, threw herself down on the bed in her room, and burst into tears.

"I can't help it," she sobbed.

## CHAPTER NINE

### A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

**O**N Saturday Livingstone arrived at Metropolis with his special car, bringing with him President Clark, the complete directorate of the International, and half a dozen of the principal men from its factory.

But even before their arrival Thomas Tabb had received a copy of the instructions to International agents sent out by Clark, in which they were told to get as many orders as possible for wireless automatics. It came from one of the International agents in Chicago, who had been on the Wireless pay roll for several weeks. In answer to this letter of instructions, Tabb sent a hurried order to his office

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managers in four of the principal cities of the country.

"Have all agents and salesmen of the International Corporation shadowed by district messenger boys," he ordered, "beginning to-morrow morning. Instruct boys to keep complete lists of all addresses at which International agents call. Have these lists turned into your office twice every day, and then have your salesmen go over the same ground immediately, calling at every address on each list and blocking whatever has been accomplished by the International. Let me have daily and detailed reports of what your men do."

Hawkins, head of the order department in the Wireless factory, came into President Tabb's private office that same evening, and looked around cautiously to see that they were alone. When he spoke it was in a whisper.

"Young Johnson, up in my department,

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is making complete copies of every order as it comes in," said Hawkins. "I don't know yet what he is doing with them."

"I do," said Thomas Tabb. "Let him alone for a while. Don't let him see that you suspect him at all. But try and get proof of what he is doing."

Down from the knock-out department came Morgan, square-jawed and shifty-eyed.

"I've got a sure way to ball up those International automatics," he said. "Can you come up to my room a minute?"

Thomas Tabb climbed the flight of stairs leading to the second floor, where, behind a screen of frosted glass, were concealed the mysteries of the knock-out experts.

There, on a table, stood one of the International's automatic wireless motors. Morgan sprang a lever and showed that the machine was in perfect working order.



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Then he passed one hand caressingly over the top of the motor and asked Tabb to try and see how it worked.

Thomas Tabb did just what Morgan had done — pressed the lever which released the train of springs and cog-wheels — but nothing moved. Something like a smile played momentarily over his pale and smooth-shaven face.

“Pretty well balled up,” he said. Morgan again rubbed his hand over the top of the motor.

“Now try it,” he said.

A second time Tabb pressed down the lever. This time the whole mechanism sprang into action.

“That’s pretty smooth,” said Tabb. “Let’s see how you work it?”

For answer Morgan displayed a lead bullet, about twice the size of a large pea. It was fastened to the end of an almost invisible horse-hair.

## A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

“That’s all there is to it,” said Morgan, with a proud grin. “See this little opening on the top of the motor? All you’ve got to do is to drop this bullet down there—hold on to the free end of the horse-hair, you see. You can do it before twenty men without any one seeing it done, and the devil himself couldn’t make the machine work while the bullet’s in place. And nobody would ever think of looking down there to find out what was balling the thing up. If he did look, the chances are a hundred in one he’d never see that horse-hair. Then, after you’ve convinced everybody that the motor’s no good, you can catch hold of the end of the horse-hair and yank out your bullet without any one’s being the wiser.”

“Send one of ’em out to every office with instructions how to use them,” said Tabb. “The International people are doing worse than that already. And get your

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boys out as quickly as possible. We don't want to let one of the International motors stick."

Thomas Tabb had three or four carriages down at the railroad station to meet Livingstone and his special car. In the carriage where sat President Tabb the two old directors of the International who were opposed to President Clark presently found themselves seated. Livingstone had arranged that without giving Clark and the others a chance to object.

"These are the only men we have a chance with," he had whispered to his principal, and Tabb, already fully informed of the feeling in the International Directory, smiled grimly back at him.

"I hope you'll pardon me for coming straight down to business," said Tabb, as they started away from the station. "I had an idea that you people intended to  
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wait about going into the wireless line until after this visit, but this letter doesn't look much like it." He handed one of the old directors the copy of Clark's letter instructing the International's agents to push for wireless automatic orders. From the top of the letter the name and address of the agent who had received it was cut away, but at the bottom was the name of Clark, the president, signed with a rubber stamp, the initials of his secretary beneath it.

Both of the old directors read the letter, which came as a distinct shock. The idea that their rival should hear of such things before they did!

"But this is just a preliminary order," said one of the old men.

"It might look that way if it were not for the fact that your whole tool-room is working on tools for wireless automatics and that you shipped three more hand-made machines last Friday."

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The two old gentlemen looked at Thomas Tabb as if he had been a wizard. They felt almost afraid to be riding in the same carriage with him. Was it possible that Clark was playing false with them in that way?

Meanwhile Livingstone had skilfully steered away the carriages in which rode Clark and the remainder of the party. When Clark asked where were the other directors and Mr. Tabb, Livingstone answered easily that they had apparently driven out to the plant another way. By the time Livingstone and his people had reached the factory, Tabb and the two old directors had already started on a trip of inspection, and Livingstone saw that they were kept apart all morning.

Tabb started his visitors in the raw stock-rooms and took them step by step through all the departments in the big plant, calling attention to the splendid sys-

## A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

tem that everywhere prevailed. He led them into a great room lined with models.

"There," he said, waving his hand around the walls, "are more than six hundred models of wireless and other motors. We have here hundreds of models that have never been put on the market. And here"—he threw open the doors of a large vault—"are more than nine hundred patents that completely cover all those models. For years we have bought up every wireless motor patent that has been granted, and we have some patents that cover other types. And now, gentlemen," went on Thomas Tabb, without a trace of a smile on his face, "we'll go out and look at the graveyard."

The two old directors looked at each other half between a shiver and a smile.

This was certainly the most extraordinary thing they had ever heard of in all their long business careers.

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Thomas Tabb led the way across a wide alley to a high stockade, enclosing a plot of a couple of acres. The center was an open space. All about the circumference was built a series of large sheds, backing up against the stockade and open in front. At the top of each of the sheds or compartments hung a large white placard lettered in black and red.

"This is all that remains of some forty companies that have tried to steal the wireless motor business," said Thomas Tabb, sweeping one hand from side to side of the graveyard. "Every one of them is out of business. Most of them failed and lost thousands for their stockholders. Altogether the remains in this graveyard represent a total loss of more than nine million dollars."

The two old men shivered now in deadly earnest.

"Let me read you some of these epi-  
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## A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

taphs," said Thomas Tabb, pointing to one of the placards. "The Capital Wireless Motor Company. Organized, 188-. Capital stock, \$1,000,000. Failed 188-. Estimated loss, \$600,000."

"You see," went on Tabb, "they quit in time to save part of their investment. Here's a company, on the other hand"—pointing out another placard—"that sunk its capital of \$200,000 in trying to steal our business, and then we got judgment for as much more against its stockholders."

All around the wide sweep of that ghastly mausoleum of business ruin, of shattered fortunes, and blasted hopes, Thomas Tabb marched his two timid old visitors. Before each of the more than thirty graves he stopped and read off, for their benefit, the grim epitaph that told in half a dozen lines how thousands of dollars had been lost. Between the lines it was as easy to read how the men who had in-



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vested their time and money in these enterprises had been driven to bankruptcy and desperation, to embezzlement, and even to suicide.

Heaped up in each of the sheds was a tangled and rusted mass of machinery, and Thomas Tabb was clear to explain that these scrap-heaps represented in each case the costly tools that had been built for the making of wireless motors, together with some hundreds of the motors themselves of that particular make. It was a sheer waste of the result of toil and money.

"We don't let them stay in use," said Thomas Tabb, grimly.

Before that visit to the graveyard was over, the two old directors had made up their minds for good and all. They thought of their sure and steady six per cent. dividends, and were in no mood to waste time and money in fighting a very devil.

## A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

Livingstone, knowing beforehand that the effort was useless, took his party through the factory in a perfunctory sort of way. The two parties met at noon, and Clark and his followers saw at a glance that so far as the two old men were concerned the trip had been productive of serious harm. Clark and Thomas Tabb bade each other good-by with the air of gladiators shaking hands before entering the ring, and the International party, declining Livingstone's offer of luncheon, went down town to wait at a hotel for the departure of their train in the evening.

At two o'clock that afternoon Tabb quietly sent for Hawkins, the head of the order department.

"Have you got the proof on young Johnson?"

"Yes," answered Hawkins, and produced a bundle of papers. Tabb sat down and looked them over carefully. Then he

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leaned over and whispered to Hawkins eagerly. Finally the young man nodded. Tabb pulled a big roll of bills from his pocket and handed them to Hawkins.

"Here's the letter," he said. "You can look it over." It read:

"THOMAS HAWKINS, ESQ.:

"You may take this letter as notice of instant dismissal from our employ. My reasons have been expressed to you verbally. We want no traitors in our ranks.

"THOMAS TABB,  
"President the Wireless Motor Company."

"Now remember," said Tabb, as Hawkins got up to go, "everybody but me thinks this is all on the square. I'll send for you in ten minutes."

Ten minutes later a peremptory order came from the president's office, requiring Hawkins and young Johnson to appear immediately before Thomas Tabb. There

## A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

were present the president's secretary and the treasurer of the company.

Calmly and deliberately Tabb accused young Johnson of betraying the secrets of the Wireless Motor Company to its rival, the International Corporation. The clerk trembled with fear and shame, and at the end when Tabb produced the proofs of his guilt, broke into a pitiful confession. Then Tabb handed him a letter and held out a similar one to Hawkins.

"You go, too," he said to Hawkins. "If this boy is guilty, you are guilty too. Now get out of here, both of you, and never let me see your faces again."

Hawkins protested, but was waved aside. He became bitter and resentful, and Tabb ordered him from his office. The curt letter of dismissal in his pocket, Hawkins went straight down to the hotel where the International party was staying and sent his card up to Clark.

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"I've been eight years with the Wireless Motor Company," said Hawkins. "I've worked in the inspection-rooms, I've worked on the stock-books, and for three years I've been at the head of the order department. A few days ago I found that one of my clerks was copying our orders and I reported it to Mr. Tabb. To-day I got the proof on the clerk and took it down to Tabb. That is what I get in return." He handed over the letter. "I've never dreamed of betraying one of their secrets. I've worked and slaved for them. This is the pay I get."

Clark took the letter and looked it over. He couldn't help feeling sorry for the young fellow. He knew, too, that the charge against Hawkins was absolutely groundless. Besides, a man who knew the secrets of the Wireless Company's stock-books and of their order department might well be valuable to him.

## A TRIP THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD

"It's a shame, Hawkins," he said. "If you'll come over to Pierson City with us I expect we can put you to work."

At ten o'clock that night Hawkins slipped off the sleeper at a way station and filed this telegram:

"THOMAS TABB, Metropolis:

"Everything worked O.K.

"HAWKINS."

## CHAPTER TEN

### SECRET SERVICE

**J**OHN SHELDON, manager of the Wireless Motor Company, had been fifteen years in its service. All the education he had, he had picked up as he advanced step by step to more important positions in the organization. He was so saturated with its methods that it was not only natural, but almost inevitable, that he should adopt similar methods in pursuing his own ambitious career.

The Wireless Motor Company had its secret service; so Sheldon had his own personal corps of secret agents and spies. Thus he got reports of what Ellen Tabb had done during her short stay at Pierson City, as a guest of Anne Edmonds. He

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had learned of her drive out to the country club with John Clark and of her sudden return to the Edmonds' house in the city. At first it had made him furious with jealousy. He had had hard work to keep from rushing to Thomas Tabb with the story. But he was, as he had always been, afraid of the old man. For all he knew it might be a part of one of Thomas Tabb's deep-laid schemes. And in the depths of his cowardly soul he trembled to think how Tabb might receive the news that one in his employ had been spying on his daughter. It was quite within the bounds of possibility that Tabb might instantly discharge him from all connection with the Wireless Motor Company. And that was a crisis to be avoided at all costs. For, much as Sheldon loved Ellen Tabb, he loved power and position more, and for years he had been planning, with the secrecy of an Indian and the guile of a serpent, so to ar-



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range matters that he might, at a stroke, wrest the control of the Wireless Motor Company from the strong hands of its president and founder.

Sheldon did not believe that Thomas Tabb had penetrated his design. And yet he was not certain. He knew perfectly well that the old man was quite capable of starting an even deeper counter-plot and of using him and his ambitions for his own purposes until the time came to spring the mine under his feet. So he curbed his mad jealousy and waited for further developments. He was hoping that the bitter fight with the International Corporation might in some way give him an opportunity to bring matters to a crisis and personally secure control of the Wireless Company. He could not, therefore, afford to do anything to weaken his present standing.

Presently, as the fight went on between

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the International and the Wireless, it began to be apparent that Sheldon's hopes were about to be realized.

Hawkins, the discharged head of the Wireless order department, could write shorthand and operate a typewriter. He was installed as an assistant in the office of President Clark of the International Corporation at Pierson City. Because of his long experience in the wireless motor line, he was shortly given practical executive charge of that branch of the business. Every evening, after he left his work, he wrote out and mailed to a secret address, arranged between him and Tabb, a summary of the important matters that he had observed that day.

Thus he reported a bitter row between Clark and the two old directors, who, on their return from Metropolis, had demanded that the International Corporation keep out of the wireless business. They also

## THE BUCCANEERS

accused Clark of playing false with them in going ahead to push the wireless automatic, while leaving them to understand that the whole question was undecided. They had appealed to Mrs. Edmonds to support them in their demand, but, so Hawkins reported, she had declared that she had every confidence in Mr. Clark and would stick by him.

Meanwhile suits for injunction and damages for infringement of patents were filed on both sides. Tabb took care to scatter his suits all over the country, filing one in New York, another in Denver, a third in Pittsburg, and so on; and in each case the filing of the suit was widely advertised in the shape of what appeared to be news telegrams.

Tabb also started suits against several manufacturers who had bought and were using the International automatic motors, and he sent papers containing notices of

## SECRET SERVICE

such suits to all the competitors of the persons sued.

Acting under instructions from Thomas Tabb, conveyed to him through the medium of Fritz Schmidt, Hawkins copied from the records of the International Corporation a complete list of all the suits pending against it in every part of the country. Among them was an old and half-forgotten suit begun years before in the Federal Court in a far Western State by Frank Wagner, a poor and obscure inventor, who claimed, by priority of invention, the patents on which the International Corporation based its control of the manufacture of motors of the ordinary type. Lacking means to employ lawyers and pay for the services of experts, Wagner had virtually allowed the case to go by default. Some evidence had indeed been taken, but the case had never been pushed to trial, and for several years

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had been in a comatose condition. Tabb put Attorney Rixton on the trail of Wagner, the inventor, and Rixton presently reported that he had succeeded in buying, for one thousand dollars in cash, all of Wagner's claims in the International patents.

Meanwhile Morgan and his knockers-out jumped from place to place, accompanied by their bullets and horse-hairs, Livingstone kept on distributing pills of gloom in sugar coatings, and the regular selling force of the Wireless Motor Company was spending most of its time in attempting to block the efforts of the International's salesmen. The stream of money which ordinarily flowed into the coffers of the Wireless Motor Company was badly blocked. It had more than doubled its usual expenses and at the same time cut down its usual income by at least half. Of course the International was under a simi-

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lar strain, but it was in better shape to stand it.

It was in this financial stringency that Sheldon, the manager of the Wireless, saw an opportunity opening before him.

It presently became necessary, if the fight was to be pushed, to borrow a large sum of money to replenish the rapidly declining coffers of the Wireless Motor Company. Thomas Tabb, himself, was entirely occupied in directing the battle. It was left to Sheldon to carry on negotiations for the loan, and ample authority was given him to act for the company in that regard.

Sheldon went to Boston to borrow the money. There, without taking any one into his confidence, he made the necessary arrangements with a man of his own kidney to borrow a million dollars, giving the note of the Wireless Motor Company for the amount. The note ran for one year, the manager fixing the time at that short

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period because he hoped that within one year he might be able to bring his own plans to a successful climax.

Sheldon had had half an idea of running up into Maine to call on Ellen during his stay in the East. After all, it had been only natural that she should have seen something of John Clark while visiting Anne Edmonds. And the fact that she had stayed but two days in Pierson City certainly did not indicate that she had been greatly impressed by him. Always, it should be remembered, next to the ambition to get personal control of the Wireless Motor business, his love for Ellen Tabb was the strongest influence in Sheldon's life. It was also true that the two ambitions were strangely mingled. If he could get her father in his power, it would give him a strong hold over the girl; if he could win the girl, on the other hand, he might be able to succeed her father at the

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head of the company without bringing the matter to a direct issue. It was characteristic of him that Sheldon kept both possible strings to his bow stretched as taut as possible.

His financial errand in Boston had been successfully carried out when, walking up Commonwealth Avenue one morning, he saw John Clark across the street. All his jealous suspicion flared up in a moment. Clark here, with the fight against the Wireless Company at its height and Ellen Tabb only a few hours away! The connection was irresistible. Keeping carefully out of sight, Sheldon shadowed his rival until he saw him turn in at the office of Ellen Tabb's uncle, Henry Harlan. It was then almost noon on Saturday, and Sheldon did not rest or stop for even a bite of luncheon until he had seen Harlan and Clark leave the office together and start in a cab for the railroad station. He



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followed, and saw them leave on the train which two hours later would land them in Harbor Point.

That night Sheldon took the train for Metropolis. He had decided now to tell Thomas Tabb what he knew about Ellen's visit at Pierson City, and to cap it with the startling announcement that John Clark, president of the International Corporation, had gone clear down to the Maine coast to see the girl again! But he would go about it shrewdly, feeling his way as he went along.

"By the way," he said, after he had told Tabb of the successful outcome of his financial errand, "I saw John Clark in Boston."

"What's he doing there, I wonder?"

"I don't know. When I saw him he was getting on a train with Henry Harlan."

Thomas Tabb sat up straight and his

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eyes narrowed with a look Sheldon knew and did not like.

"A train for the West?" he asked.

"No; it was a North-bound train in the Boston and Maine Railroad station. I guess Harlan was taking him home for the week end."

Sheldon hesitated for a moment, fearing to go any farther. Then his jealousy got the better of his discretion.

"Did you know, Mr. Tabb, that John Clark is paying marked attention to your daughter?" he ventured.

"Sheldon," answered Thomas Tabb, roughly, "you talk like a fool. I gave you credit for more sense than to run bearing tales like a jealous schoolboy."

"When your daughter was visiting in Pierson City," Sheldon persisted, his face red with anger, "this man Clark was her escort to a ball and took her driving into the country. Now he has followed her

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down to Maine. I thought you might be glad to know the situation as a mere matter of business."

Thomas Tabb laughed unpleasantly.

"Don't worry about it, Sheldon," he said. "I can look after my own family."

But, though he thus affected to put no stock in Sheldon's story, the mere possibility that it might be true made him bitterly angry. And before the first heat of his wrath had cooled, he sat down and wrote a letter to his daughter.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### CAPITULATION TO FORCE

**E**LLEN TABB was writing her promised letter to John Clark when her father's note was handed to her. She had put off writing from day to day because she could not make up her mind what to say. She was torn by conflicting emotions. She knew what her mother and, most of all, what her father would feel and say if word should reach them that she was writing to John Clark even the most commonplace of letters. The idea of accepting him as her lover was simply grotesque. And yet——

Argue as she would with herself, she could not get away from the fact that she was at the same time impressed and at-

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tracted by the tremendous force of the man. Worst of all, she was afraid of him. It did not seem possible for her to resist him. What was the use of trying? Perhaps, after a time, when the present business battle had been fought and won——

“Dear Mr. Clark,” she wrote, “I shall try to be quite frank with you. Any woman would be flattered by your proposal. But you must see that in the present circumstances it is entirely impossible for me to entertain it for a moment. Perhaps some day——”

She stopped to tear open the envelope containing her father’s letter, which her aunt had just handed her. A letter from Thomas Tabb was rare enough to be significant.

“I hope there’s nothing wrong at home, Ellen, dear,” said Mrs. Harlan.

“Oh, I guess not,” she smiled back as she started to read it.

## CAPITULATION TO FORCE

"DEAR ELLEN:

"I am told that John Clark, president of the International Corporation, is making love to you, and that you are encouraging his attentions. I don't believe a word of it. I suppose you know that this man Clark is the head of the gang of thieves which is trying to ruin your father and steal the bread out of your own mouth. It surely is unnecessary for me to forbid you to see him or have anything to do with him. He has bribed my clerks to play the part of spies and sneaks. Now he would make love to my daughter in the hope of getting further information about my business. I would disown you in a minute if I thought you were weak and foolish enough to disobey me or to receive him without my knowledge. But I hope I know you better than that. I am told that your uncle Harlan has had Clark at his house in Harbor Point recently. I don't believe that either. I don't believe he'd have anything to do with such a scoundrel. At any rate, I think the best place for you just now is at home. I'll expect you on the first train. I'd come down and get you if my fight with the International wasn't just at its height."

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"Why, what's the matter, Ellen?" asked her aunt, alarmed at the girl's white, drawn face.

"Oh, nothing! nothing!" said Ellen, doubling her fingers together until the nails bit into the tender flesh. "I suppose father's been a little worried about me, that's all."

She gathered up her writing materials and went up to her own bedroom. There she lay down, dry-eyed, and thought it all over, until her head ached and throbbed with the pain of it. At first it was the shame of the situation which overwhelmed her. Through no fault of her own she had been caught between these two relentless millstones, and now she felt herself almost squeezed to death. Then slowly something of her father's deep stubbornness and deadly pride made itself felt. She forced herself to walk over to the writing-desk, and there, only half conscious of what

## CAPITULATION TO FORCE

she was doing, she sat down and wrote a letter.

“DEAR FATHER:

“I went to visit Mrs. Edmonds at Pier-son City without the slightest idea that she was interested in the company you were fighting. At her house I met John Clark, without knowing at all that he was the president of that company. He drove me out into the country, and on the way he told me, not realizing that I was your daughter, that your company was notorious for cowardly, tricky, dishonorable tactics. It shocked me terribly, and that was what sent me back home in such a hurry. Since I have been here John Clark has come East twice to see me—not at my invitation, but against my protest.

“Now you disown me and tell me I am no longer your daughter if I see him. What have I done to be treated in this way? Is business the only thing in the world, that my whole life is to be determined by it? Business! which turns men into savages, and has already driven me almost frantic with shame and confusion! What am I to do? Where am I to turn?



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I can't come home just now. I must wait. And I have written John Clark the truth. I have told him what my father says and that I shall not see him again."

That letter finished, she dashed off a note to John Clark, put them in their respective envelopes, and called the maid to send them into the village to be mailed.

The result of Ellen's two letters was not what she had expected, if, indeed, in her excited and distracted frame of mind she had had any clear idea of what that result might be. At any rate, the note to John Clark brought him hurrying across to Harbor Point as fast as trains could carry him. He drove out to the cottage from the station with the village-hack horses lashed to a lather, and met Ellen just as she was leaving the Harlans' gate for a walk along the shore. She did not see or hear the coming hack as it rushed through the deep, sandy roads, and the first she knew of

## CAPITULATION TO FORCE

John Clark's presence was when, leaping out, he stood by her side, hat in hand and calling her by name.

As she turned to face him, her first feeling was, strangely, one of relief. Here was a strong man who could be relied on. He cared for her for herself alone—she was more important to him than even the great god Business. Here was one on whom she could safely lean. Then quick alarm followed as she looked into his glowing eyes.

"Ellen," he said, "I am to blame for it all, and I have come to help you."

"But I wrote you that I must not see you again. Already my father——"

"No man shall write as he did to the girl I love," Clark broke out. "I know you are in trouble, dear. I know I am responsible for it. I can save you from it. You must let me do it. It's a shame, dear."

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"How could you leave home now?" asked the girl, fighting for time.

"I could leave anything, at any time, when you are in trouble," he declared. "And I shall not go back until you have given me the right to protect you."

She was in great trouble. She dreaded to face the future. On the one side her father's pitiless anger. On the other the fierce love of this man—her father's bitterest foe. Her father had disowned her already, unheard. John Clark held out open arms to her. She was half afraid, half attracted. It would separate her from all her family, from many of her friends, she knew.

"I don't know what to do," she trembled. "I don't know what to say."

John Clark took her indecision as a sign of victory.

"Don't say anything now, dear," he said. "Come, we will walk back to the house."

## CAPITULATION TO FORCE

Mrs. Harlan smiled, unknowingly, as she saw the two walk up the lawn together. She opened the door herself and received John Clark warmly.

"Welcome, if unexpected," she said, smilingly, as she shook his hand. "You must have your bag sent over from the station."

That evening after dinner Mr. and Mrs. Harlan and their guests sat on the wide piazza overlooking the sea, to drink their coffee. The door from the central hallway opened suddenly, and, unannounced, Thomas Tabb stepped out into the circle. Ellen rose and started forward to greet her father. But his face was as hard as steel. He did not recognize her presence. With a black look in his eyes he turned to John Clark, who, with the rest, had risen to his feet.

"You sneak!" he hissed. "You coward! Ellen," he commanded, "come with me!"

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"Father," pleaded the girl, while Mr. and Mrs. Harlan looked at each other with startled anger in their eyes, "please wait and let me explain."

"Your letter explained all I want to know," he snapped. "Now I find you here with this dog. I'll——"

"Father, it isn't fair, it isn't right!" said Ellen.

Thomas Tabb suddenly turned very cold and white. All the red anger left his face. His voice was now low and icy.

"Very well," he said, looking his daughter in the face. "Do as you please. I bid you good-by, madam"—turning to Mrs. Harlan—"I wish you joy of your guests."

Then he turned and walked quickly back through the house.

"Father," called Ellen, and started to run after him; but he did not turn his face,

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and only quickened his steps to the carriage which was waiting at the door. Mrs. Harlan hurried to follow Ellen.

"Thomas Tabb and I are rivals in business," said John Clark to his host, as the two men still stood together on the porch. "I love his daughter Ellen, and I have asked her to be my wife."

"Well, for the sake of the girl," said Mr. Harlan, "I think you'd better get married as quickly as possible."

Ellen told the whole miserable story to her sympathizing aunt, and cried for an hour on her shoulder.

"Never mind, dear," said her aunt. "If you love John Clark well enough to marry him, I'm sure it will all come right in the end."

The next day Ellen Tabb gave her promise to John Clark. She was half terrified as she did so, but there seemed no other way out of the web in which she found her-

## THE BUCCANEERS

self caught. An irresistible power, greater than any mere personal agency, seemed to have been at work from the beginning of her acquaintance with him. And so, with tears in her eyes, she waved a farewell to her affianced husband as he drove away from the house to catch the late train for the West.

It had been arranged that Ellen should go with her aunt and uncle to their town house in Boston, there to remain until her marriage. She had refused to set her wedding-day, feeling a reluctance which she could not overcome to make the step irrevocable. John Clark, for all his masterful ways, had been forced to be content with her simple promise to become his wife. But he felt that the one great object of his life was now securely within his grasp, and he hurried back to Pier-son City, where the battle with Thomas Tabb was fast reaching its climax, de-

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terminated to make his victory in business no less complete than it had been in the struggle for the affection, or at least the possession, of the old man's only daughter.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

### A TRAITOR ABOARD

THE week of the meeting of the State Federation of Women's Clubs in Metropolis finally arrived. Mrs. Edmonds, who had accepted the invitation of Ellen's mother during the convention, left Pierson City without at all connecting the name of her hostess with that of the Wireless Motor Company.

Clark, with the idea of saving Ellen from further embarrassment, had been careful not to mention the name of Thomas Tabb in his conferences with her over the business situation. Mrs. Tabb met her at the station in Metropolis and drove her to the house. Mrs. Edmonds' first

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inquiry had been as to Ellen's health and whereabouts, and the girl's mother, obeying the strict injunction of her husband, had not mentioned the break between daughter and father, simply saying that Ellen was well again and was still with her aunt in the East.

That evening at the dinner-table Thomas Tabb, in the course of a casual conversation, allowed Mrs. Edmonds to discover for herself that he was the president of the Wireless Motor Company, which the International Corporation was fighting. When she spoke of it as something she had not suspected, he, too, affected surprise that his wife's guest should be so deeply interested in this business controversy, and said, in response to her half-playful request for advice, that in his opinion women ought to keep their money invested in United States bonds.

One event on the programme of the In-

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dustrial Section of the State Federation was a visit to several of the large factories of Metropolis. Mrs. Edmonds asked Mr. Tabb at breakfast that day if he would not consent to act as her guide through his factory, and he, after some laughing allusions to the dangers of showing a deadly rival all his business secrets, agreed to the proposal. And that-morning, with a skill and diplomacy which delighted him, he succeeded in utterly destroying the influence which President Clark of the International held over her and her investments in his company. He did it without seeming to attempt to do it, and so thoroughly that, after an hour spent with him in that gruesome graveyard, looking at all there was left of the wrecks of fortunes greater than hers, Mrs. Edmonds could hardly wait to get back to Pierson City and rescue her estate from certain and complete destruction. The day after she returned home,

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Hawkins had a sensation to report in his secret letter to Tabb.

"Mrs. Edmonds has changed her position completely," he wrote. "She now sides with the people who are fighting Clark, and they are only waiting for a stockholders' meeting to oust him from the control of the company."

Thomas Tabb allowed himself one of his grim smiles when he read that letter. He counted the victory over the International now within sight. It was characteristic of him that, his daughter having once come between him and the accomplishment of his business purposes, he should now look upon her as an enemy, and not the least of his satisfactions in the imminent outcome of the fight, was the feeling that she would be thus taught the folly of opposing him.

To make his victory the more certain, Tabb instantly ordered papers prepared

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for a suit of five hundred thousand dollars damages against the directors and stockholders of the International Corporation, charging conspiracy to ruin the business of the Wireless Motor Company, and instancing the bribing of the clerk, Johnson, to reveal its secrets to the International Corporation. He sent Livingstone to Pierson City to file the papers. That worthy took them over to the Court House, filed them in the clerk's office, and then had himself interviewed in the leading afternoon paper of Pierson City at a dollar a line. That interview was as smooth and crafty as the man himself. As a matter of fact, it was directed straight at Mrs. Edmonds.

"There is a principle of business honor involved in this suit," concluded Livingstone, impressively, "and the Wireless Motor Company will not stoop to compromise in such a matter."

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And, strange as it may seem, the hypnotic Livingstone firmly believed for the moment that what he was saying was a profound truth!

But Thomas Tabb was not to be allowed to win the great fight so easily as he imagined. John Clark, with his back against the wall, was fighting desperately to retain control of the International Corporation. And, closer at hand, an even more dangerous and tricky enemy was at work.

The brutal rebuke administered by Thomas Tabb, when he had been informed that John Clark was paying attention to his daughter, rankled in the venomous mind of Sheldon. To personal ambition there was now added a burning hatred of his superior officer, and he was straining every nerve to hasten the coming of the time when he might successfully attempt to seize control of the company. With

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Tabb entirely absorbed in directing the fight against the International, both the active financial and executive direction of the business had been put into the hands of the able, resourceful, and entirely unscrupulous manager, who had been given enlarged powers and the new title of First Vice-President. In preparation for his coup, at discreet intervals and on apparently good pretexts, Sheldon had discharged several of the most important men in the service of the company. The real reason for their discharge was, of course, the fact that they were men who, in an emergency, would put loyalty and common honesty ahead of possible financial gain. Sheldon had an instinctive and implacable dislike for an honest man. He feared that such an one might discover his deep-laid plans, and he was determined to avoid, if possible, such a catastrophe.

Albert J. Rixton, general attorney for

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the Wireless Company, was the one man in whom Thomas Tabb came nearest to having anything like complete confidence. Though still in his early thirties, Rixton had practised law for several years in New York, and had there won some reputation as a master of the intricacies of corporation law. His abilities had early attracted the attention of Thomas Tabb, who had attempted, when Rixton was leading counsel on the other side of a case in which Tabb was interested, to find some way to influence the action against the interests of his clients. Rixton's firmness in following the rules of professional ethics against his own financial interests and in the face of tremendous, though indirect, pressure, had deepened Thomas Tabb's respect into a conviction that Rixton was a man to be depended on. So, shortly after, the lawyer was permanently attached to the staff of the company at a handsome salary. And



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Thomas Tabb found the counsel of a thoroughly honest and competent man a strangely satisfying luxury.

Sheldon had felt from the first that, before he could hope to carry his conspiracy to a successful issue, Rixton must be got out of the way. To this end he was now bending all his energies, and it seemed certain that he would succeed. Rixton had been to New York on business and climbed on the sleeper in Jersey City, tired and out of sorts. Before turning in he walked forward to the smoking-room, and sat down to quiet his nerves with a cigar.

"Pardon me, isn't this Mr. Rixton?" asked the only other occupant of the smoking-room as he walked in.

Rixton recognized the speaker as a lawyer whom he had known slightly during his practise in New York, and acknowledged his identity. The two men sat down side by side, and presently drifted

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into one of those strangely intimate and confidential conversations which the atmosphere of a Pullman smoking-compartment so often seems to inspire.

"Are you still in New York?" asked the second lawyer, whose name was Clarkson.

"Oh, no," answered Rixton; "I spend almost all my time now at Metropolis."

"Well, that's strange. I'm on my way out there now. I'm going out to see about accepting an offer to act as general counsel for a big manufacturing company there. Perhaps you can give me some advice."

Clarkson took from his inside coat pocket a letter, the envelope of which bore the stamp of the Wireless Motor Company. He took the letter from its cover and handed it to Rixton.

"There, read that," he said.

Rixton cast his eye to the bottom of the letter, and there recognized the signature

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of Sheldon, over the official stamp of the First Vice-President of the Wireless Motor Company.

"Nathan Clarkson, Esq.," the letter began.

"DEAR SIR:

"We should be very glad to have you consider an offer to act as general counsel for our company, as we have determined to make a change in that department of our business. If you care to consider such a proposition, we should be pleased to have you come to our plant at Metropolis and hold a conference as to salary and other arrangements with our Mr. Sheldon, First Vice-President of our company, who has entire charge of such matters. Immediate attention to this letter and a visit at your earliest convenience will be greatly appreciated. Please address Mr. Sheldon personally, and on coming to Metropolis call on him directly, without disclosing the object of your call. You will understand the necessity of keeping our negotiations confidential until they are completed."

"Well, it's a good company," said Rix-

## A TRAITOR ABOARD

ton, "and the place should pay a good salary."

"Then you'd advise me to accept it?" said Clarkson.

"I can't advise you on that point. You'd better wait and determine for yourself after looking over the ground."

Clarkson put the letter back into his pocket and the conversation drifted to indifferent topics. When the train reached Metropolis in the early morning, Rixton took a cab and drove directly to the residence of Thomas Tabb. For all he knew, the old man might be fully cognizant of and a party to Sheldon's purpose to get rid of him. He was determined to forestall such action.

Thomas Tabb, surprise written on his face, received the lawyer in his library.

"Why, what's the matter, Rixton?" he asked.

"I have come here to present my resig-

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nation as general attorney and counsel for the company," answered the lawyer.

It was plain that Thomas Tabb was greatly astonished at the announcement. His face expressed not only surprise but consternation at this apparent desertion in the face of the enemy.

"Why, what's the matter, Rixton?" he repeated. "Aren't you satisfied?"

"I'll take it for granted, then, that you don't know," said Rixton. He then went on to tell of his meeting with Clarkson and the letter which had been shown him. When he had finished, Thomas Tabb broke out into a volley of curses. The old man did not swear often, but he had never lost the facility acquired during his service in the army in Missouri. From swearing he relapsed into complete quiet, sitting for a minute with eyes closed and hands clenched on his lap. When he looked up there was a slow and cunning smile on his face.

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"I've been onto that dog of a Sheldon for months, of course," he said, "but I didn't think he'd be bold enough to try this trick. However, I'll put a block in his spokes right away, and before the end of the week I'll land him out in the street. Wait till I call my carriage."

"My cab is waiting," answered Rixton. "We can use that."

Without waiting to finish his breakfast—for Thomas Tabb never allowed anything to interfere with business—the two men jumped into the cab and were driven to the plant of the Wireless Motor Company. There Thomas Tabb summoned a clerk who had come to work early, and dictated an order. It was directed to the chief of the Employment Bureau, a copy in carbon being made for Sheldon and laid on the latter's desk.

"But perhaps he's made a contract with Clarkson already," said Thomas Tabb.

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"No," said Rixton. "Clarkson told me that he had an appointment with Sheldon for nine o'clock this morning here at the factory."

"Very well," answered Tabb. "Then we're all right. In the mean time here's a job I want you to devote all your time to until you get it done."

He pulled out from one of the pigeon-holes in his desk a typewritten memorandum, on which Rixton recognized with a start of astonishment a list of all the discharges made by Sheldon during the fight with the International and even before it. There were also notes of half a dozen other transactions in which the actions of Sheldon were fairly open to a suspicion of lack of loyalty to Thomas Tabb.

"I want each item on this list thoroughly investigated," said the old man. "Get the evidence together in legal form, and let me have a complete copy of it as

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quickly as possible. To-morrow, if you can."

When Sheldon reached the plant a few minutes later he found this order on his desk:

"Beginning with the first of the current month, it is hereby ordered that no person shall be employed for the service of this company in any capacity at a salary of more than one thousand dollars a year without the approval, in writing, of the president."

It was signed in ink by Thomas Tabb himself. As Sheldon read the simple and apparently harmless order which he greatly feared sealed his own doom, a cowardly pallor came into his face and the look of a hunted and desperate coyote into his eyes. But it seemed necessary to make some show of astonishment. It would never do to let it be understood that he realized the full import of the order. Summoning all his hardihood, he picked



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up the order and walked into the private office of Thomas Tabb.

"Why, what does this mean, Mr. Tabb?" he demanded, making a good show of indignation at this infringement of his authority.

"I'll tell you what it means," roared the old man, striking his desk with a blow of his fist. "I'll tell you what it means. It means that the pay-roll is getting too damned big. We've got to keep down expenses. That's what it means."

Oh, was that all? Sheldon could not entirely suppress the look of sudden joy which came into his pallid face. He felt like a condemned murderer to whom a reprieve has come ten minutes before the time appointed for the drop to fall. He stammered an apology and an approval of the intent of the order, and backed out of the office to hug himself as he walked back to his own room.

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The old man was fooled after all!

As Thomas Tabb watched the retreating form of the vice-president, there came a shrewd, unpleasant twinkle into his eyes. He was thinking how few men there were who could afford to sit in the same game with him.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### WALKING THE PLANK

A FEW minutes later the card of Nathan Clarkson was brought into Sheldon's room. In order to save his face, Sheldon received the lawyer from New York most affably, but in the conference which followed he named a salary so absurdly small, and made so many exacting conditions, that Clarkson became indignant and cut the conference short. Sheldon handed him a check to cover the expenses of his trip from New York, and heaved a sigh of relief as he saw the cab drive away from the factory. He could afford to wait for a more suitable opportunity to supplant Rixton. And he had been

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too badly frightened by Thomas Tabb's order to take any immediate steps.

All that day and the next Sheldon spent most of the time in congratulating himself on having escaped detection. He had been entirely deceived by the old man's apparent wrath, and looked forward to carrying his plot to a successful conclusion at some more opportune time. His good luck had certainly not deserted him.

At three o'clock Rixton, the attorney, brought to Thomas Tabb's office the completed abstract of the evidences of Sheldon's disloyalty. The old man took it with a grim smile.

"Thank you, Rixton," he said. "I'll send for you again a little later."

Alone in his office he went over the document line by line. Then he rang the bell and sent for Rixton, Livingstone, and two or three other of his principal men.

"Come with me, gentlemen," he said,

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and led the way into the room occupied by Sheldon. The vice-president looked up from his desk with startled eyes as the procession filed into the room. His face grew white again and he half rose to his feet.

"Sit down, Sheldon," said Thomas Tabb; "sit down."

Then he drew from his pocket the long, typewritten document prepared by Rixton. Sheldon's eyes followed his every movement. Abject fear and furious anger alternated in his expression. Tabb went ahead, slowly and deliberately, willing to prolong the agony and to make the humiliation of his treacherous subordinate as complete as possible.

"Sheldon," he said, finally, in a cold, cutting voice, "why did you try to discharge Rixton and fill his place with Nathan Clarkson of New York?"

Sheldon's eyes darted to the face of Rix-

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ton, who stood beside Thomas Tabb and on whose face was a look of chagrin and indignation at this method of procedure.

Sheldon started to stammer an explanation. All his nerve had left him. He was abject.

"Don't try to lie about it, Sheldon," went on the old man, pitilessly. "I know all about it. Listen."

He read a synopsis of the steps Sheldon had taken, and followed it with some statements of his own, outlining Sheldon's probable motives. Then Thomas Tabb moved to the next count in the indictment, reading first a question, and then, without allowing an opportunity for an answer, piling up on the head of the craven wretch before him a detailed account of the proceedings in each instance.

It was torture. Sweat stood on the white forehead of the vice-president, and the other men in the room turned away

## THE BUCCANEERS

their faces, ashamed to be witnesses of such long-drawn-out cruelty. Before Thomas Tabb had half completed his reading, Sheldon was almost in a state of collapse.

"Let me go," he pleaded, and started for the door. But Thomas Tabb stopped him.

"Sit down, Sheldon," he commanded. "We're not through yet."

Then he summoned half a dozen stalwart teamsters who had been stationed within reaching distance beforehand. They filed into the room, hats in hand.

"There, Mike," he said, pointing to the desk before which cowered the vice-president, now a pitiable figure, "take that desk and carry it three blocks away somewhere. Put it down in the street and leave it there. Then come back and go to work."

Sheldon got up again from his seat, and

## WALKING THE PLANK

Thomas Tabb pointed a withering finger at him.

"Go with your desk," he said, "and never let me look upon you or anything that belongs to you again. You're not smart enough to be a successful sneak."

Sheldon slunk out of the office in the wake of the grinning teamsters who were carrying his desk, and Thomas Tabb turned to the shame-faced men who had acted as witnesses to this remarkable scene.

"That's all, gentlemen," he said. "This has been an unpleasant duty for all of us."

Sheldon, relieved of the crushing influence of the personal presence of Thomas Tabb, gradually recovered his courage. He was aflame with rage and shame at the way in which he had been treated by the old man. His first impulse was to rush straight to the International Electric Corporation and betray to its officers all the



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secrets of the Wireless Motor Company, as far as he knew them. But his recent experiences had emphasized the importance of caution and discretion, and he decided to wait twenty-four hours before taking any decisive steps.

The next morning after his humiliation, Sheldon found in his mail a note from his secret agent in Pierson City, reporting, as a matter beyond question, that John Clark was to marry Ellen Tabb. He cursed as he reread the statement. So everything was going against him at the same time! In the shame of his discharge by her father he had never once thought of Ellen Tabb. But now his love for the girl—and he was a man capable of strong passions—came home to him with special bitterness.

Then he thought, with a momentary pang of pleasure, that the news would be quite as distasteful to Thomas Tabb as it had been to him. Wouldn't the old man

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writhe when he heard that his only child was to marry his bitterest enemy! But that, after all, didn't help his own case. The girl would be lost to him. The hardest thing about it all was that he had suddenly become a negligible factor, a person of no account, either in the conduct of the business or in the affections of the girl.

Into his mind suddenly came the memory of Will Baldwin. It was he of whom Sheldon had been chiefly jealous, so far as Ellen Tabb was concerned. He was a good judge of men, and his eyes, sharpened by jealousy, had noted a delicate but significant difference in the way Ellen had treated the young preacher. He knew all about the way in which Thomas Tabb had forced his dismissal as the rector of St. Mark's Chapel. At the time he had rejoiced at Baldwin's removal. It left his own path clearer. Now he wanted to tell Baldwin the secret of his sudden dis-

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missal by the vestry. In Sheldon's frame of mind, it was something to make another man miserable, even if in so doing he did not help his own cause in the least.

The next day he made cautious inquiries and found, from the present occupant of the pulpit, that a letter addressed in care of the bishop would be certain to reach Baldwin. So he sat down and wrote a full statement of the case, declaring that Thomas Tabb had coerced the vestry in order to get the preacher out of the way of his daughter. He went on to say that now the girl was engaged to John Clark, president of the International Corporation, having become, as it were, part of the spoils of the war between the two corporations. In full detail he outlined the fight between the Wireless and the International, telling about the bribery, the tricks, and the chicanery on both sides.

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"When this war is settled," he went on, "it will be found that, in return for certain concessions on the other side, Thomas Tabb has turned over some patents and his daughter to boot."

As Sheldon mailed his long letter, he had malignant hopes that in some way it might involve Tabb and his family in fresh difficulties. At any rate, it was some satisfaction to thrust fresh thorns into the wounds of one of his rivals, even though an unsuccessful one. After a long debate he had signed the letter with a fictitious name.

To Will Baldwin, who had, after leaving Metropolis, immediately thrown himself, on the advice of his bishop, into work in the slums of another great city, Sheldon's letter came as a tremendous shock. For months he had been fighting to force Ellen Tabb out of his memory. The letter served to revive his love for her. After

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all, he wondered painfully, was it right, was it necessary, that duty, as he saw it, should be the one controlling factor in his life? He faced and conquered a powerful impulse to hunt the girl up and, at any cost, save her from the web of deceit and dishonor in which she seemed to be involved. In the spirit in which the Trappist monks beat themselves with knotted ropes, Will Baldwin scourged his heart with tender memories of Ellen Tabb, of her beauty, her grace, of the virgin purity of the soul he had seen in her great blue eyes.

Duty conquered. He shut tight the door of memory, and went out that night to visit and relieve God's poor, with his teeth clenched and in a mood fit for the storming of redoubts and the leading of forlorn hopes, where a compelling sense of duty might show the way to valorous action. And in his decision he was sus-

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tained and uplifted by the power of a great renunciation.

The evening of Sheldon's dismissal, Rixton, the attorney, turned to Thomas Tabb, as the two men left the office of the deposed vice-president.

"Don't you think it's rather reckless, Mr. Tabb," he said, "setting Sheldon's desk out in the street that way? It's probably got some valuable papers in it, and he won't hesitate to use them."

"There might be some danger of that kind," said Thomas Tabb, "if I hadn't had the desk searched last night and all the valuable papers taken out of it. I don't mind telling you, Rixton," he went on, "that I did the thing that way for the sake of its effect on the men who saw it and on those to whom they tell the story. So perish all traitors. I call it a pretty good object-lesson."

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE BLACK FLAG UNFURLED

OVER at Pierson City, John Clark, secure in the promise of Ellen Tabb to marry him, was concentrating all his energies in a desperate effort to retain control of the International Electric Appliance Company, of which Mrs. Edmonds' defection seemed certain to deprive him. In less than a week he had almost consummated a deal which set Hawkins frantic when he heard of it.

"Clark has completed arrangements with a couple of banks here," he wrote in one of his secret reports to Thomas Tabb, "to buy for him all of Mrs. Edmonds' stock holdings. The banks are to advance the money, holding not only the Edmonds'

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stock, but also that now owned by Clark, as security."

When Thomas Tabb got that report from his spy, he dropped his gray eyebrows far down over his eyes. Then, without a word even to his confidential men, he went home, packed a suit-case, and took the evening train for Pierson City. He realized that if Clark should once get full and undisputed control of the International Electric Corporation, it would go hard with the Wireless Company. The final decision was plainly a matter of days now—perhaps of hours—and Tabb wanted to be on the spot if any quick action were needed. That was the advantage of a one-man company, he reflected—there was no board of directors to be cajoled and persuaded before one was allowed to strike. Before the train started he took the risk of sending a telegram to Hawkins at his house address.



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"Meet me to-morrow night at Sandell Hotel in Pierson City," he wired.

Arriving at Pierson City in the gray of the evening, he drove at once to the hotel and went straight up to his room to await the coming of Hawkins. The night grew old and there was no word from him. Finally, at ten o'clock, he slipped into the room.

"There's the devil to pay, Mr. Tabb," he said. "I don't know what's to become of me. I may be arrested before morning."

The young man broke down and sobbed.

"Don't be a fool, Hawkins," said Thomas Tabb. "What's up?"

"Why, Clark knows I'm crooked. He caught me day before yesterday eavesdropping. He was talking in his room with one of the Mathis brothers—they're the bankers who are going to finance his deal.

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He opened the door suddenly and ran straight into me. He didn't say a word to me then or since. But I've been watched every minute since that time."

"You got my telegram all right?"

"What did you send that for? That only made things worse. They didn't find me this morning, and when the boy came up to my room with it this evening I recognized him as a kid who used to work out at the International factory.

"'What's de matter wid you, Mr. Hawkins?' he said. 'When I started to come in here wid dis message, dey was a man stepped out from behind a tree and says: "Who is dat telegram fer, young feller?" I told him it was for you, and he offers me a half for a peep at it. But I'm too wise for dat, and so he give me de half not to say nothing about it, see?'

"I left the gas burning in my room and slipped out the back way as soon as I had

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read your message. I expect they've followed me to the hotel."

"You're just rattled, Hawkins," said Tabb. "Let's get down to business now. What did you hear before Clark came out and ran into you?"

"Mathis was talking about backing out of the deal, because he thought you people would keep the International from making any money out of the wireless motor business.

"‘Suppose they do for a while,’ Clark answered. ‘They’re losing money faster than we are. Besides, the wireless motor business is only one little end of our business. We’re making big money every day on the sale of ordinary motors. We’ve got an absolute monopoly on their manufacture and sale. We get four hundred dollars for every one we put out, and there is nobody to bid against us that amounts to anything. There’s a margin of two

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hundred dollars on every machine. Don't you see how it works? The Wireless people are losing money on their whole business. We are making just as much money as ever on nine-tenths of our business, and can afford to lose a little for a while, if need be, on one-tenth of it. Then, when the Wireless Company gives up, we can build up the wireless business into a gold mine. It's a cinch.'"

"I see," said Thomas Tabb, slowly.

A low knock sounded on the door of the room. Under the door appeared a closely folded slip of white paper, pushed through between door and sill. Thomas Tabb walked over and picked it up.

"The grand jury returned indictments for criminal conspiracy against Thomas Tabb and Thomas Hawkins this afternoon," he read. "Officers have started out to serve the warrants. Fritz Schmidt."

Thomas Tabb folded the slip of paper

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and burned it in the gas flame without a word to Hawkins.

"What time does the next train leave for Metropolis?" Tabb asked, finally.

"At one o'clock," answered Hawkins.

"It's now just eleven o'clock," said Tabb, taking out his watch. "We'll leave on that train." He stepped to the annunciator and rang for writing materials. For half an hour he sat busily writing at the little marble-top table, Hawkins sitting by speechless. Finally Tabb looked up.

"How do you think this reads?" he asked.

"'Electric Motors at Half the Present Rates!' That'll be the top display line. 'We have purchased all the rights and patents of Frank Wagner, the real inventor of electric motors of the ordinary type, and have turned our whole factory to their manufacture. Until further notice we will take orders for such motors at \$200 each,

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complete and set up. Better Motors than Those Made by the Trust!' That'll be another display line. 'Our motors of the ordinary type will have all the improvements which have made our wireless motors so popular and successful. Satisfaction absolutely guaranteed. Don't Foster a Monopoly!' There's a third display line. 'Buy of us at half the prices charged by the robber trust, which has kept Wagner, the real inventor, out of the rights for years, and against which we shall prosecute a suit for damages in the sum of a million dollars.

" 'We have advertised this offer all over the country, and are prepared to accept any number of orders under the above conditions.

" 'THE WIRELESS MOTOR COMPANY,  
" 'Metropolis.

" 'By THOMAS TABB, President.'"

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Hawkins only gasped in astonishment.

"Come," said Tabb. "I want you to go with me. We'll go down the back way." Thomas Tabb called a bell-boy and settled his hotel bill. Then he and the trembling Hawkins were taken down to the ground floor on the freight elevator. Slipping out of a rear door, they climbed into a cab.

"To the office of the *Morning Herald*," Tabb ordered. In the business office of the newspaper, Thomas Tabb asked the rate for a full-page advertisement.

"One hundred and ninety dollars," said the man in charge.

"Will you put me on the outside page?" asked Tabb.

The man promised, and Tabb handed over the copy he had prepared.

"Look that over and see if it's all right," he said. "I want it to appear in the morning without fail."

The copy was approved, Tabb counted

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out one hundred and ninety dollars in cash, and he and poor Hawkins got into the cab again and were driven to the railroad station, where the train for Metropolis was already waiting. As they left the cab Fritz Schmidt stepped up to Tabb.

"Carry your grip, sir?" said Schmidt, and as Thomas Tabb handed him his suitcase he fell in behind and close to his employer.

"The cops are still watching Hawkins' house," he said. "They know you are in town, but haven't located you yet."

"To-morrow morning, Fritz," said Tabb, "there will be a full-page advertisement in the *Herald*. Wire me if it appears and let me know anything you can find out about it. And get these telegrams off right away. Got any money?"

"Plenty," answered Fritz Schmidt.

The telegrams were all alike. They were addressed to the agents of the Wire-



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less Company in four towns which the train would reach after daylight in the morning.

To each of these agents, as they came into his sleeper along the road, Thomas Tabb gave a copy of the advertisement he had prepared in Pierson City, with instructions to have it printed that afternoon in the local paper, occupying a full page of space.

President Clark of the International picked up the *Herald* that morning, and one of the first things which caught his eye was the full-page advertisement cutting the price of electric motors of the ordinary type down to \$200, announcing the purchase of the rights of Frank Wagner, and signed by Thomas Tabb as president of the Wireless Company.

"It's the last move of a desperate and beaten man," he thought, and was comforted.

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The telephone bell rang in the hall.

"A lady to speak to you, Mr. Clark," said the servant. It was Mrs. Edmonds. She had seen the advertisement and was frantic.

"I must have the money for my stock to-day," she said. "I will not wait any longer. I shall call a meeting of the stockholders for to-morrow unless I am paid to-day," she said.

Clark tried to quiet her fears and promised to call on her during the day. He had hardly got back to his office when there was another call for him on the telephone.

"This is Mathis," said the voice at the other end of the wire, and Clark recognized that he was talking to the banker who had practically agreed to advance the money for the purchase of the Edmonds stock.

"I just wanted to tell you," said Mathis, "that we have decided not to go into that

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deal for the purchase of Mrs. Edmonds' stock. I suppose you saw the *Herald* this morning. That doesn't leave much profit on the ordinary motors, does it?"

"It's only a bluff," Clark assured the banker. "He had to do something to counteract the effect of the indictment yesterday. I'll stop and see you on the way to the office."

Clark found the banker obdurate. That left the president of the International without much hope. At his office he found several of the directors waiting for him. The two older men, who had opposed his radical course, were bitter, and pressed for an immediate settlement with the Wireless people at the best terms obtainable. By three o'clock telegrams began to come in from the agents of the International in the towns where Thomas Tabb had had his advertisement printed:

"Wireless Company is offering motors

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of the ordinary type at half price—\$200. Full-page advertisements in the newspapers. Shall we meet the rate?"

All day Clark was buffeted by constant complaints and entreaties from frightened stockholders. Toward evening Mrs. Edmonds, backed by the older directors, took action looking toward the forcing of a special stockholders' meeting. Even the people who had hitherto stood by Clark began to weaken. It was evident that he was finally and completely defeated.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE PRIZE ESCAPES

**O**N the day after she had promised to marry John Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Harlan took Ellen Tabb back with them to their town house in Boston. Although Ellen had positively refused to set a date for her wedding, Clark felt sure that he would not be obliged to wait long.

"She won't feel like staying with you more than a few weeks longer," he told Mrs. Harlan, "and she can't go back home again. When she leaves your house it must be to go into her own home. The sooner she does that, the better it will suit me."

Mrs. Harlan and her husband both agreed with Clark that it would be well for

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Ellen to marry without delay. Mrs. Harlan undertook to show Ellen the wisdom of so doing.

"Once you are married, my dear," she said to the girl, "and things are settled for good and all, your father will see the folly of objecting any further. The quickest way and the only way to reconcile him to the situation is to be married as soon as you can get some clothes made."

But the more Ellen reflected on the promise she felt she had been practically forced to make, the more she shrank from setting the day on which the law and the church should set their seal upon her promise and make it forever binding. Her whole nature still trembled from the shock of the sudden and violent separation from her father and mother. The fact that she could find herself no whit to blame in the matter helped not at all. Not once had she heard from home since the night when

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her old father had bidden her good-by. She had felt sure that Mrs. Tabb, at least, would write, and she had herself written three or four heartbroken letters to her mother at Metropolis. But no word had come in response, and Ellen felt herself daily more and more alone in the world, cut off from the love and sympathy of her natural protectors and caught in the current of an irresistible torrent which bore her, struggling, nearer and nearer to an abyss over which she dreaded to be flung.

“Oh, it must be my fault!” Ellen cried to herself, over and over again. “It must be my own fault!”

Every night she knelt down and prayed for help and guidance. Help and guidance she felt she must have from some source, and from human counsel she seemed utterly shut off. Her aunt had utterly lost the girl’s confidence, and there was no one else to whom she could appeal.

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Every morning a big bunch of great pink roses was sent to the house for her on John Clark's order, and every morning it seemed more and more a painful reminder of something which she wished rather to forget. Every day, too, there came two or three telegrams from her affianced husband, and at least one letter. Clark's letters were short. He was fighting with all his strength against the craft and cunning of Thomas Tabb, and he took time only to daily renew the pledges of his love and to urge Ellen to set the day for their wedding. His letters were like bulletins from a battle-field.

Ellen had read his first note, with its fervent protestations of love, with a strange feeling of aloofness, as if it had been a bit of correspondence cut from the pages of some novel. She had tried to force herself to write an answer in the same mood in which his note had been written, but



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the words of affection refused to come from her pen. She started and tore up half a dozen sheets of paper, and what she finally sent was a pathetic compromise.

"Dear John," she wrote, "you must forgive me if I do not write much or often. You must wait until I get more used to it. I thank you for all you have done for me."

Then one morning there came a thick envelope addressed to her in her mother's handwriting. Ellen seized it with trembling hand, as one cast away on an ocean might clutch a floating plank. She hurried up to her room, locked the door, and sat down to read it.

"My dear, dear daughter," her mother had written. "You have almost broken my heart. Your father has forbidden me to write you or to mention your name in his hearing. I have had your letters, and I can wait no longer to answer them. What can I say to you? Do you love this

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man you have promised to marry well enough to give up your father and mother for him forever? For that is what it will mean. I know your father too well to hope even that he would ever relent. He was wedded to his business long before he married me, and he has always been true to his first love. I have never been more than a pleasant incident in his life, and this is the first time that I have ever ventured to seriously disobey him. That is what I chiefly fear for you in your coming marriage with John Clark. He, too, is a great business man. He knows the tremendous fascination of wealth and of the power which money and position bring with them. Can you ever hope to hold more than the second place in his affections? And will you be satisfied with that?

"I have always had a beautiful home, plenty of servants, and all the money I wanted to spend. You can be certain of

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having them also. But is that what you want? Will that make you happy?

"I sometimes wonder if the wife of a great business man was ever a happy woman. I wonder whether the excesses, the follies, the absurdities of so many rich women do not deserve pity rather than anger and denunciation. Are they not the vain and frantic efforts of women whose soul-lives have been starved, to convince the watching world that they are, after all, happy and to be envied? A man wins tremendous success in business only by making it the one great passion of his life. Almost always his wife is left to live on the crumbs which fall from the table of her successful rival.

"Forgive me, Ellen. If you love John Clark, and if you are sure he loves you better than he loves his business, you will be happy. And always I pray God that you may."

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Mrs. Harlan rapped on the door as Ellen finished reading the letter. The girl thrust it inside the bosom of her dress as she unlocked the door and allowed her aunt to enter.

"Well, what did your mother say, Ellen?" asked Mrs. Harlan.

"Oh, father is very angry with me," said the girl.

"He'll forgive you, once you are safely married, my dear. Don't you want to go out with me this afternoon and do some shopping?"

Ellen declined, pleading a headache. Finally, to avoid further insistence, she said she would go and take a walk in the park; but her aunt would not hear of it.

"If you want to go," said her aunt, "at least take the carriage. I shall not want it this afternoon."

So, after luncheon, Ellen took her seat

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in the victoria and told the coachman to drive to Franklin Park. She felt that she must get away somewhere by herself and think. Her mother's letter had stirred her deeply. It had seemed to crystallize and make plain the vague unrest and uncertainty which had beset her ever since her engagement to John Clark. More than ever she felt the lack of some one from whom she could ask sympathy and counsel in her bewilderment.

She was driving down Commonwealth Avenue, leaning back in the carriage with only half-seeing eyes, when suddenly a pair of broad shoulders thrust themselves into her field of vision. There was something familiar about them. Ellen sat up straighter in the carriage and studied the retreating figure for a moment.

"A little faster, please," she said to the coachman. He whipped his horses, and presently they were abreast of the man,

## THE PRIZE ESCAPES

who was striding along with face set firmly to the front.

Yes! She was right! It was Will Baldwin. On the instant her mind was made up. Hardly conscious of what she was doing, she called to him from the carriage.

“Mr. Baldwin!”

The young minister turned in answer to her call. She saw the muscles of his face tighten and a hard look come into his eyes as he recognized her. He stepped out beyond the curb, hat in hand, to shake hands with her.

“Miss Ellen,” he said, “I am very glad to see you again.”

She felt a delicious thrill as she touched his hand. It seemed to her the most natural, the most delightful thing in the world that she should be sitting there in that crowded Boston street, talking to the tall young rector. She asked him about his work and about his health. He answered

## THE BUCCANEERS

briefly, seeming ill at ease and anxious to be going.

"Well," he said, shortly, "I sha'n't keep you here in the street any longer. And I'm very glad to have seen you again. Good-by, Miss Ellen."

He turned to go.

"You'll come to see me?" said Ellen.

"I'm afraid I can't promise," he said, with a strained look in his eyes. "My work keeps me very busy."

Again he turned to go.

"Will Baldwin," said Ellen, leaning forward from the carriage, "there is nobody in all Boston who needs your advice and counsel so much as I. Please do not leave me alone."

He walked toward the carriage and stood there irresolute. Ellen threw open the door.

"Get in," she commanded. He sat down beside her.

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"To the park," she ordered, and the coachman started his horses. Ellen and Will Baldwin sat side by side in silence for a moment. Then she forced herself to speak again.

"You have never told me why you left Metropolis," she said.

"It isn't a pleasant subject," he replied, "and I didn't think it would interest you particularly."

"Do you think it was kind to your friends to go away and leave no word of where you were going?"

"Miss Ellen," said Will Baldwin, sternly, "I thought you wanted some good advice."

"I do; but first you must tell me why you left Metropolis. And your note—it wasn't like you. It was like a glass of cold water thrown in my face. What had I done to deserve such treatment?"



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Will Baldwin tightened his grip on the side of the carriage before he spoke.

"I left because I was forced to go. I had no choice. I could not explain to you then, and I can't explain now."

"But you must tell me. We have always been good friends. How can I give you my confidence if you deny me yours?"

"Ellen, you wouldn't understand. It cut me to the quick at the time. It had nothing to do with the church. It was purely a matter of business."

"Business!" the girl broke out, bitterly. "Business! You are driven from your church! I am disowned by my father and engaged to marry a man I hate! Business is responsible for it all!"

Tears came into her eyes and she looked appealingly at Will Baldwin.

"Oh, can't you do anything to help me?" she whispered.

## THE PRIZE ESCAPES

On the instant his whole soul flamed up into words.

"Ellen," he said, "I would give my life to help you!"

Her hand touched his clenched fist as it lay on the seat of the carriage, and there was that in her eyes which caught up Will Baldwin nearer to heaven than he had ever been before.

"But, Will," she said, "I am engaged to marry John Clark."

"Break the engagement," he commanded. "You love me."

Now she was smiling at him through her tears.

"You advise me, then—" she began, but he interrupted her.

"Don't, Ellen," he said. "It is your life and mine which are in the balance. Your father drove me out of my church. He has disowned you and driven you into an engagement with this man, who is another

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of his own kind. It is sacrilege, dear. It is dishonor. I can offer you only poverty and hard work and all my love. Will you take them?"

"Will!" was all she said by way of answer.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### BOOTLESS SPOIL

**T**HAT evening, before she went home, Ellen Tabb sent a telegram to John Clark, absolutely and finally breaking her engagement with him. But Clark, with defeat staring him in the face, had slipped away to Metropolis for the purpose of arranging terms with his successful rival, and the message passed him in the night.

Thomas Tabb allowed no personal considerations to interfere with business, and when the card of his future son-in-law was brought into the office, he received him at once.

"Before we discuss anything else," said Thomas Tabb, when he had shaken hands with Clark, "there is one little matter

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which must be arranged. The indictments against Hawkins and myself must be quashed before I'll make any agreement. You must admit," he concluded, grimly, "it wouldn't look well to have your future father-in-law sent up for a term of years. And I might do a little in the indictment line myself, if it becomes necessary. There's the clerk Johnson, you remember."

Clark, whose relations with the political powers in Pierson City were intimate, was certain that he could arrange to have the indictments quashed, and said so.

"The prosecuting attorney is my man," he said, "and he'll do what I tell him. That's how I was able to get the indictments so quickly," he admitted, with a knowing smile.

"Well," said the old man, "we'll go ahead, then, on that basis. Of course, if the attorney don't come to heel when you

## BOOTLESS SPOIL

whistle, we can call the agreement off. I sha'n't sign any papers until I am formally and officially notified that the indictments are killed."

A stenographer was called in after the two men had thoroughly discussed the terms of settlement, and a formal agreement was drawn up for signature. It provided that the Wireless Motor Company, on its part, should turn over to the International Electric Appliance Corporation all its patents on motors of the ordinary type, as well as all models, and should give bond not to make or sell any such motors for a period of twenty years.

The International Corporation, on its part—the terms being practically dictated by Thomas Tabb—agreed to assign to the Wireless Motor Company all its wireless and automatic patents and all its tools for their manufacture, completed or under way. It also agreed not to make or sell

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such motors for a period of twenty years, and to pay to the Wireless Motor Company the sum of fifty thousand dollars in full for all damages sustained during the fight.

It was further agreed on both sides that all suits of any kind begun by either company should be at once dismissed.

The agreement dictated, Thomas Tabb and John Clark went to luncheon together. The completed arrangements were on the old man's desk when they came back to the factory in the afternoon. Thomas Tabb picked one of them up and handed it to Clark.

"There," he said, "you can take that with you. Just as soon as I get word that the indictments against Hawkins and myself are quashed, I'll——"

A clerk, looking badly frightened, came rushing into the room and handed an open telegram, wet from the wire, to Thomas

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Tabb. The old man read it without changing the expression of his white, impassive face. He read it a second and third time, while Clark looked at him, half in alarm. Then Tabb tottered and almost fell from his chair.

Clark ran to his assistance and raised him up into his chair again, the telegram, mussed and wrinkled, still clutched in his right hand. With a tremendous effort Thomas Tabb pulled himself together.

"It's a little bit sudden," he said. Then, slowly, a queer little smile spread itself over his drawn, white face. "By the way, Clark," he went on, "this ought to be of some interest to you, too."

Slowly the old man straightened out the rumpled telegram on his desk. Then he handed it to the puzzled Clark.

"Thomas Tabb, Metropolis," he read. "Will Baldwin and I were married this morning by the bishop. Ellen."



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"Clark," said the old man, holding out a skinny, trembling hand to be shaken, "women are hell."

It had been a stifling August day, and as Clark took his seat in the sleeper that evening for the return trip to Pierson City, his head ached and his nerves were on the jump. From a business standpoint he had, indeed, managed to save the day, but only at a big loss of money and a still larger loss of personal prestige. He felt, however, that with the Wireless Company out of the way he should probably be able to retain control of the International Corporation. That was a certain satisfaction. After all, it was something for a man of thirty-five, who had left the farm only twenty years before, to have achieved so early in life the presidency of a corporation with a capital of ten millions of dollars.

He straightened his slender figure and twisted one end of his light brown mus-

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tache. Thomas Tabb had got the better of him! Yes; but Tabb was a commercial pirate—a business buccaneer, a man to whom nothing counted but the result. And he, himself? Well, a man must fight the devil with fire. Treachery, dishonor, bribery! They were ugly words. Clark shook his head, shocked with the result of his self-examination.

And Ellen! Why had she so suddenly broken her word to him? It cut his self-esteem to the quick. Well, women were all alike, he reflected. Not to be trusted! Not to be depended on! Then he recalled his mother on the old farm and the tender look in her brown eyes as his bearded father came in late from his work, brown and wet with sweat. Something within him writhed as he remembered.

The train stopped at a little, red-brown, water-tank station. Clark looked idly out of the window. Before him, in the early

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twilight, lay a wide hayfield. In the foreground, close to the track, three men were piling up the fragrant load on a huge rack. Before it the old white horses lolled listlessly, their legs wide apart, their heavy heads drooping.

As the train started again there came the sound of a distant farm-bell from behind the rounded shoulder of a hill. It was the signal for supper. One of the haymakers climbed to the front of the load and gathered the reins. The other two clambered up on the rear wheels, and, pitching forward, threw themselves luxuriously on their backs into the soft and yielding hay. They lay there, looking up at the stars, as the hay-rack creaked away over the clipped fields. Clark watched them out of sight.

"Lord! Lord!" he said, softly to himself; "wouldn't it feel good to be nice and tired and dirty and honest again!"





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